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No. 28 AUGUST 1987
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ZZAP! 64

MONTHLY REVIEW FOR COMMODORE SOFTWARE



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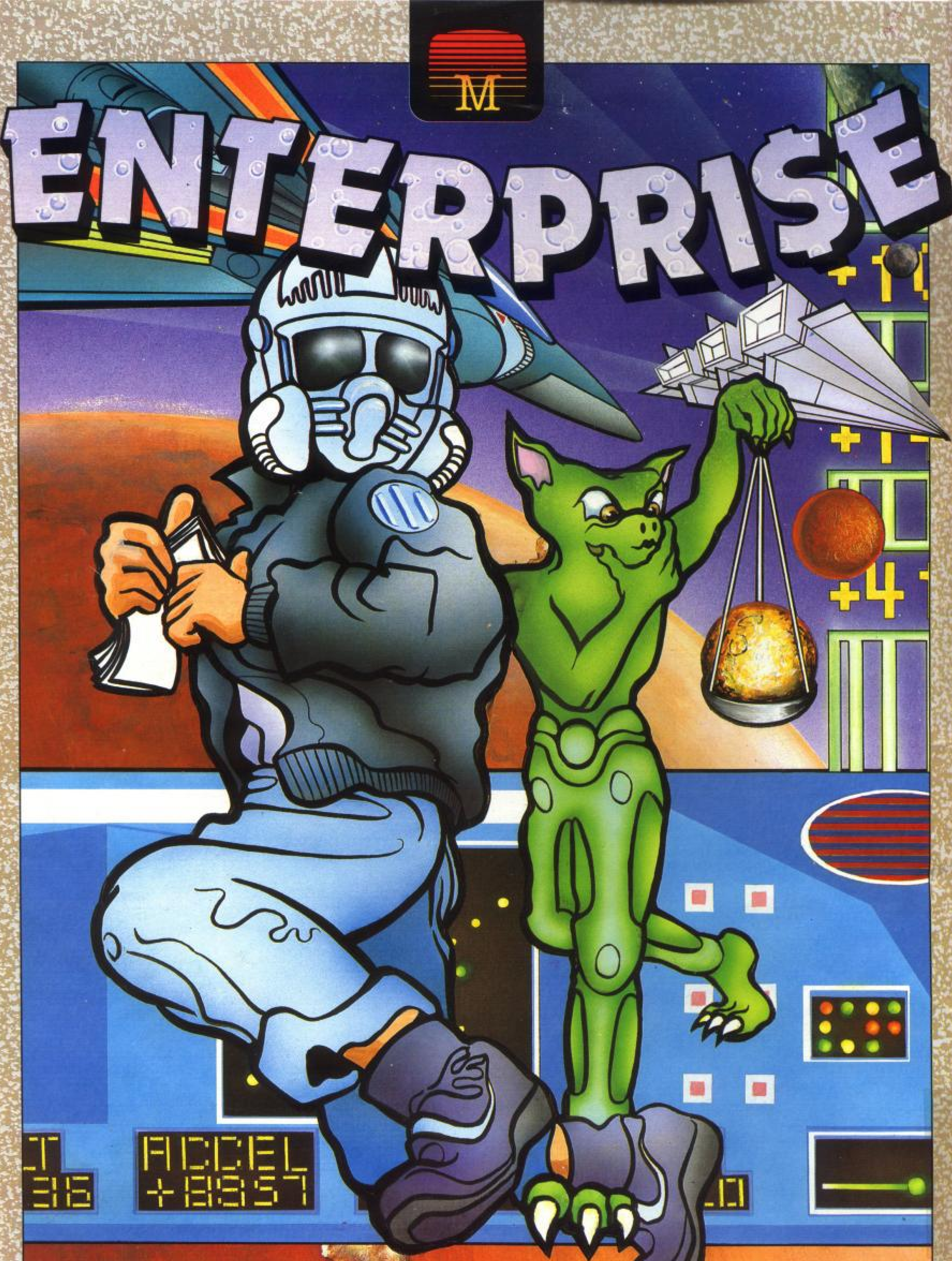
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ISSUE 28 AUGUST 1987

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CRACKING COMPETITIONS

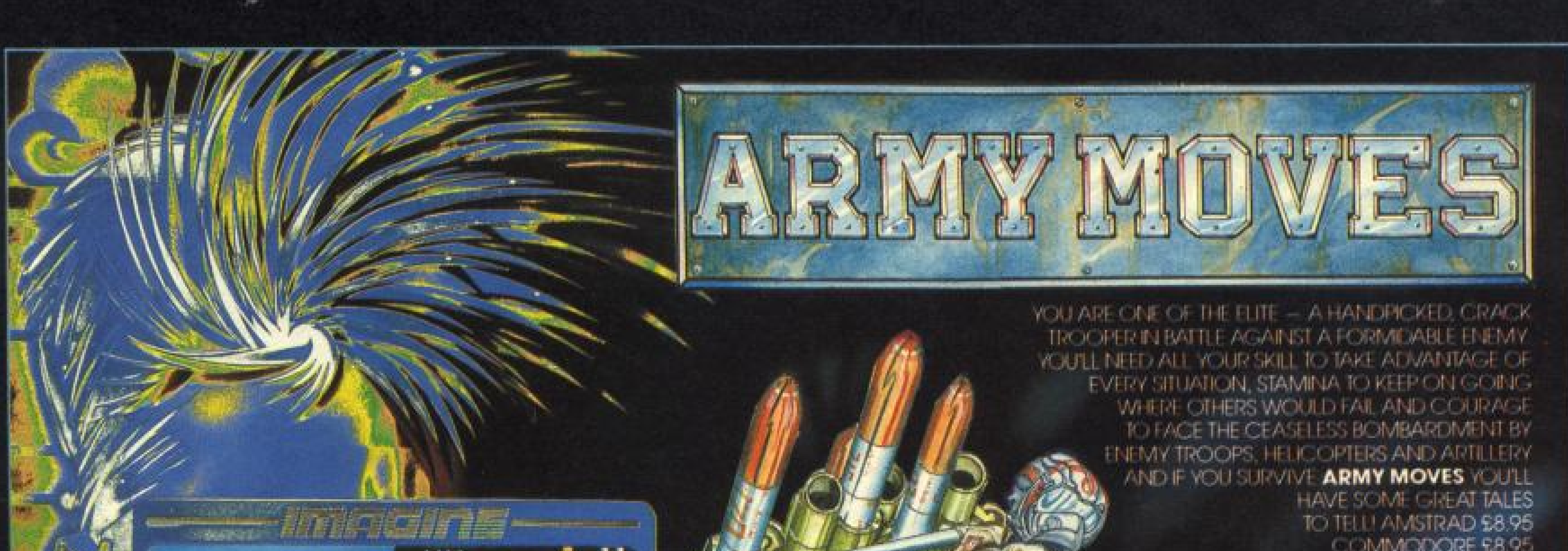
The next ZZAP!'s on sale July 9th. And can we carry on without the aid of the chief spiky one? Tune in next month for the answer.


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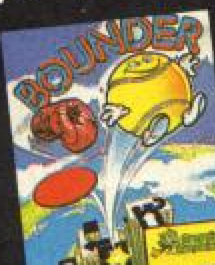
Screen shots taken from various computer formats

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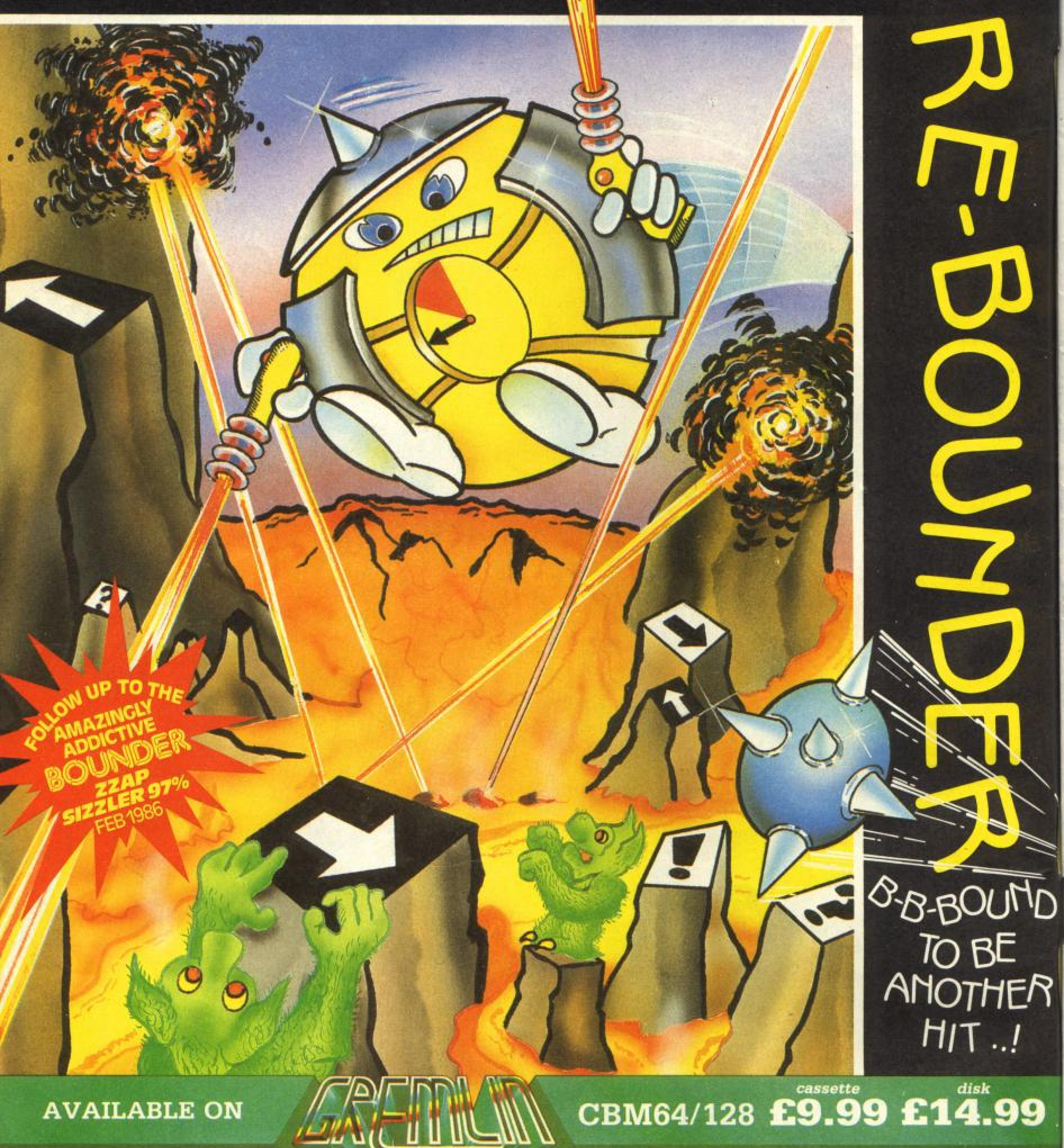
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ZZAP! ED

SAY HELLO, WAVE GOODBYE . . .

After 27 issues here at ZZAP! Towers, it's time for me to say goodbye as I leave to risk life and limb on a daring secret mission. I've thoroughly enjoyed working on ZZAP! for the last two and a quarter years, and thank you for your support – it certainly wouldn't have been the same without you. This is by no means a final departure, as I will be back from time to time to keep you informed of various developments in the Commodore world – but until then it's goodnight from me . . .

As of this issue, ZZAP! is in the capable hands of my good friend and colleague Ciarán Brennan – so it's over to you, Ciarán . . .

Hello there,
Although I've been slaving away here in ZZAP! towers since last October I'm still a relative mystery to most of you, so let me introduce myself. I was born in 1964 in Dublin's fair city, and left a couple of years ago to see the world (so how did I end up in Ludlow?).

Having originally been brought in to clean up the mess left by the CRASH reviewing team (they called it reviews), I soon realised the intellectual superiority of the Commodore owning public and took the earliest opportunity to move across to ZZAP! Now that I've been given supreme power over your favourite reviewers (albeit with a little help from Mr Rignall who is to be my assistant), I intend to see to it that your favourite Commodore magazine continues to leave the opposition trailing in our wake.

Finally, some of you have already written in to comment on my receding hairline, but I'd like it put on the record that I'm not balding . . . I have my hair cut this way!

Now for some more serious stuff. Due to extreme exam pressure Philippa Irving has had to temporarily shelve the Manoeuvres section, but don't worry strategists – she's back next month, refreshed and ready to go.

The questionnaire has thrown up some unusual results, and true to form we are taking great heed of what you have to say. Overwhelming popular demand means that next month will see the return of the Readers' Challenge, so start writing in if you would like to take part (not forgetting to include your age, phone number and choice of game).

Another small change is the removal of the VALUE rating from the end of our software reviews. This is a general Newsfield policy decision, taken because it was felt that the OVERALL rating should be a sufficient pointer to a game's value, and therefore that the VALUE rating was redundant. Watch out for other tweaks in future issues.



That's enough for this month, have a good read and we'll see you again next month – Gazless but unbowed!

Ciarán Brennan

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

GAMES REVIEWED



► The Woodward and Bernstein of computer journalism (that's Ciarán and Gary to the uninitiated) enjoy a last cup of coffee together before Mr Penn finally takes his leave



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Struggling to get this finished in between thunderous storms, drenching downpours and continual power cuts whenever there's lightning, it suddenly occurred to me that summer has arrived at last. The weather seems to echo readers' sentiments about software these days, and that subject is the major theme of this month's letters. Most correspondents mentioned the cover-mounted demo cassette, saying how good they thought it was, and can we do another very soon. Such matters of state are out of my hands, but I've no doubt there will be another soon enough.

However, onto this month's Letter Of The Month, which kicks off a mini debate on the merits and disadvantages of multi-load games . . .

MULTI-LOAD – IT'S THE NAME OF THE GAME

CONCURRENT-LOAD

Dear ZZAP!
Because so many games now are multi-load, games like *Gun Ship*, *Super Cycle*, *World Games* and many more, I wonder why software houses don't follow Software Projects's excellent idea; which is that the next level loads while you're playing the first level, and so on. It's a great notion because there's nothing more annoying than completing a level and then having to wait for the next level to load. So come on software houses, get your act together.

By the way, there's only one word to describe the tape on the cover of last month's issue and that's *superb*.

P Croft, Blackpool

Glad you enjoyed the tape – pity we didn't get the various parts to load while you were playing one of the demos, but you can't have everything in this cruel life. Software Projects have boxed quite cleverly with this way of getting around the inevitable multi-load wait, and I'm sure others will follow the example eventually. Thank you for drawing attention to a good idea, and your software will wing its way (well it'll get posted anyway) as soon as you let us know your desires.

LM

HERE TO STAY

Dear Lloyd,
Whatever people think, multi-loads are going to play a significant part in cassette games in the months to come, as concepts become greater and memory more powerful with greater graphics and sound.

As time goes by, more complex games are going to appear on disk, and, therefore, inevitably on cassette multi-load. So people have two choices, either buy a disk drive and keep dishing out 15 quid for good, fast disk games . . . or buy multi-load cassettes.

I would carry on buying multi-loads, purely because I haven't got enough money to buy a disk drive . . . and then the disk for it. And what about the other millions of Commodore 64 owners and thousands of ZZAP! readers with their computer and tape decks switched on eagerly awaiting their next level feed of sprites? What about them US Gold? What about them English Software? What about them Ocean? Because if they don't buy your games then you're finished.

But you'll keep churning out multi-loads because of people like Steven Hunter in ZZAP! Rrap page 12 Issue 26. Whilst going on about *Gunship* he points out, 'Anyway, to a dedicated simulation freak a multi-load is soon forgotten, as you can go make a nice cuppa while side B loads in.' Judging from that he doesn't mind multi-loads, and sees them as a kind of break in which to pursue your desires.

But what about Letter Of The Month, same issue page nine? Stuart Wynne, said, 'Multi-loads are almost invariably to be regarded as a sin, and avoided.'

Multi-load is a debatable subject and one I hope other ZZAP! readers will think about and write in about, perhaps even start a topical debate. Keep up with the good work Lloyd! Adios!!

David J Washer, Middlesex

I can remember (when I were a lad and Bovis was a company that built brown houses) when I first got a 64, being astonished at the time I had to wait for a cassette game to load – almost 20 minutes for some. After the average three-minute Spectrum load, it seemed an awful long time to wait. And yet thousands of 64 owners then were used to it, without much complaint. Speed loads have changed much of that, thank goodness – now we've just got multi-loads to carp about. But not everyone thinks the debate should centre on the inconvenience they cause, as the next writer shows . . .

LM

MULTI-COST THE PROBLEM

Dear ZZAP! Lads,
I'm writing to argue with the views of a reader who (in Issue 25) complained about multi-loaders. If he is so disappointed with multi-loads, why does he still buy them? It can get very annoying when all you hear about is multi-loaders. We should be thanking companies such as Palace, Epyx and Hewson. We should also be thanking Mastertronic and Firebird for keeping their Gold budget range going.

Companies such as these have done most things right. Games like *Super Cycle*, *Cauldron II* and *Uridium* have shown just how good the 64 has become. Forget multi-loads, instead people should be complaining about prices.

How can you expect to pay up to £15 for a good game? People haven't enough money to buy good games at these prices (me included). Two stores in my shopping centre have reduced games to as little as 99p, and the games are selling like hotcakes. Then you look at the full-priced games. The shelves are full, nobody wants to buy them at a tenner.

Keep up the good work ZZAP! and keep on giving away free items, such as demo tapes and posters. They're brill! At least I don't have to pay a tenner for a tape full of excellent computer art!

Steven Linton, Fife, Scotland

There's no doubt that game prices are a much more central theme to everyone's letters than the problems of multi-loaders. But I fear that the price war will be with us for a long time to come.

LM

PRESSURED PROGRAMMERS

Dear ZZAP!
Firstly, may I congratulate you on The Sampler Tape, for only 50p it was a great bargain and I hope it will be repeated in future.

Now onto the serious part. With the recent decline in Gold Medals and Sizzlers you have had many letters criticising ZZAP! 64 for the problem, which I feel is totally ridiculous as the standard of games is only assessed by ZZAP! not set by you.

With the of lack of good software hitting nearly every software house, there must be something common to all of them and which is harming the whole industry. This 'bug' must be sorted out before it harms the industry permanently.

My view is that software is being rushed out due to the games being advertised way before anything solid is ready. This imposes deadlines on programmers, causing them to come under extreme pressure, and further causing them to be careless in writing the program; in not giving them time to polish off



ZZAP! RRAP

the game and eradicate any bugs present. Take for example *Breakthru* – it seemed to have 'rushed' written all over it, no title screen, poor graphics, bad sound, bugs and no message of congratulations or acknowledgment when the mission was completed.

If programmers were given more time, or put under less pressure, they could ensure more care was taken over the game and be able to put their own ideas into it. This would make the game more worthy of the price being asked for it. In terms of value, not many games can be considered to be worthy of their price. For £9.95 you can buy five singles, or two albums, or hire about seven videos. Take that in comparison with the majority of games and they often pale into insignificance.

I consider very carefully the length of time I will keep playing a game and enjoy it. Recently I've purchased a few wargames and find them to be tremendous value for money as they can be played for hours, and they provide a good alternative to arcade games.

So I say to software houses, give programmers some space to breathe and let them develop the project, not rush it, and so provide the public with games they're happy to spend their well-earned tenners on!

Shaun Russell, Durham

To be honest, I don't think the situation has changed much over the past two years – advertising deadlines have always been a driving force to complete a program, and with programmers (especially in-house teams) on salaries, the longer a game takes to write, the less profit will be made on it. But perhaps we all notice the small (and great) mistakes more often now, when the product costs more than it used to. There can be no doubt that rushing a program can only lead to a less than well-polished game, but you must also bear in mind the problem a software house faces when programmer promises of finishing by a mutually agreed date fail to materialise, and costs begin spiralling alarmingly. It's getting the balance between taking short-cuts to avoid financial ruin on a project, and making sure everything is right that is the crucial mark of success in a software house.

LM

WINTER SPORTS FOR SOFTWARE

Dear Lloyd,
What exactly is the software market coming to lately? The past six months have been absolutely dire. Between the January and June editions of ZZAP! this year (which has managed to retain a remarkably high standard despite the fact that in the world of Commodore software we've been going through a Winter of Discontent) there have been a meagre 13 games awarded Sizzlers and there hasn't even been one Gold Medal. Bad times indeed. Compare this with the some time period in 1986 when we had 16 Sizzlers and five Gold Medals. And if you really want to ruin your day, compare the 13 sizzlers of now with the the glorious 28 (count them) Sizzlers and six Gold Medals between the merry months of July and December in good ol' 1986.

One thing's for sure, this decline in Sizzlers and Gold Medals isn't because the ZZAP! Review team are more choosy these days, as one letter writer suggested. In fact I would go as far as to say that they've been too generous with their Sizzlers in some cases, namely *Gunship*, *Eagles Nest*, *Park Patrol* and *Gauntlet*. Let's face it, at this rate 1987 isn't going to go down in history as the year of the Commodore game is it?

For me, issue 26 of ZZAP! was a revelation. It showed just how desperate a state of the software scene is in, for the Commodore at least. This is why – out of the ten best games in that issue, going by the Overall percentages, and discounting adventures:

1. Five of the games were pushing on four years old
2. One game was a version of the arcade game *Qix*, which has been around since pre-Biblical times at least!
3. One (*Gods And Heroes*) was a platform game that looks as if a PET computer was used as the development system.
4. Only four games out of 22 got 80 percent or over. Compare this with exactly a year ago when seven games got 90 percent or more!

This may look depressing on paper – but that's because it *is* depressing. These Activision games were written in 1984, we should be laughing at them now, not giving them good reviews – and certainly not awarding them Sizzlers! Just think about it . . . if a game written in 1981 had been re-released in 1984, the reviewers would have wet themselves laughing, for in those three years software improved to an astonishing degree; not so much in graphics but in improved gameplay – the games had become infinitely more imaginative.

Now it's three years later still – why haven't we seen more innovation, and more imaginative game concepts? If anything we've taken a step backwards since 1986 – returning once again to shoot 'em ups and maze games (remember *Maziacs*?).

I remember in the old days ('when I were but knee high to a Hovis sandwich etc') when I had my first computer – a Spectrum – games were real games, with real staying power such as *Manic Miner*, *Atic Atac*, *Football Manager* (still the best game of its type) and *Ant Attack*. And on the Commodore it was just as good, with *Gribbly's Day Out*, *Dropzone* and the lesser known Parker games, *Gyruss* and *Q-Bert*, all of which knock spots off many new 'big' games. Now, alas, we occasionally have good graphics but we rarely have games as good as yesteryear's. An irony, isn't it, that with all the technical improvements programmers' imaginations are jacked.

So what can software companies do to get out of this rut? I certainly don't know – but perhaps professional games designers could help. Let them get on with designing the games and let the programmers do the programming. Fortunately it's not all doom and gloom. There's always Andrew Braybrook, Jeff Minter, Tony Crowther and (whatever happened to) Paul Woakes, people we can rely on, and there are some new faces in the form of Sensible Software, Chris Butler and Stavros Fasoulas, who show great promise.

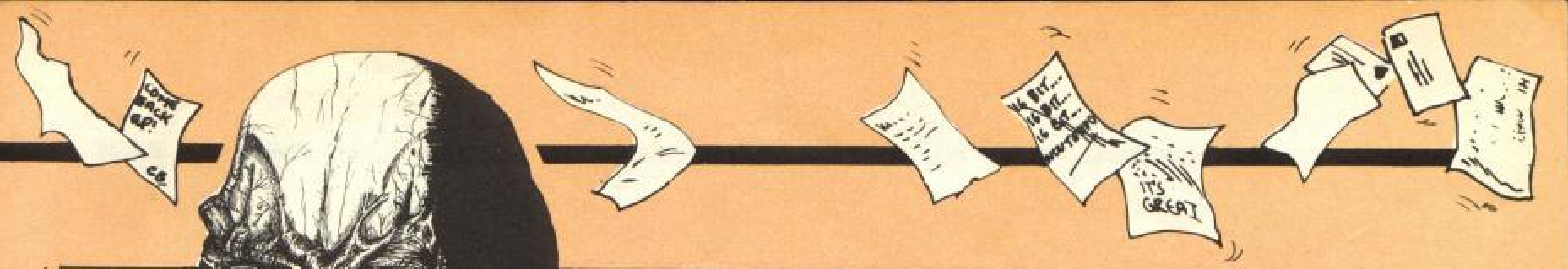
And as for the rest of the programmers – well, they can either shape up or ship out.

Chris Machin, Staffs

Some strong sentiments there, Chris, but I must say I agree with them. There's really no reason to suppose that because someone is a wiz with the processor that they're also great at designing games. Part of the problem, as you point out, is that original ideas have been thin on the ground. This could be because we've simply eaten our way through all the ideas there are – but I do not believe that for a moment, and variations on a theme can be as vitally interesting as the original theme.

No, the real problem has been the numbers of programmers tied to producing games from licences, either coin-op conversions (where there's no imagination from the programmer required or allowed) or film/TV tie-ins (where a great game may be possible, but freedom to 'tinker' with the licencee's hero is limited). The result is that we've become tired of 'conversions' and 'licences', often because they simply aren't very good realisations of the original, or because the original itself was a bore, and this reflects across the board – even the programmers must be feeling tired of them.

LM





LLOYD REVEALED

Dear Lloyd,
Seeing as you won't print a picture of what you're like, I've drawn what I think you're like.
Like it?
Rick Jones, Dover.
PS The ZZAP! sampler tape was great.

Simply splendid Rick. I particularly like the subtle chiaro scuro you've employed to heighten the existentialism of the prognathous jaw – whatever happened to dear old Brigitte?
LM

SOME INTELLIGENT POINTS

Dear Dude,
I rarely call anyone a dude, but you, Lloyd, are an exception because you are one hell of a whacky guy. I must also compliment the rest of the team for producing such a wicked magazine of which I have been an avid reader since issue one (lick lick).

Being such a loyal reader of your fabulous mag I have many questions about you, ZZAP! and life which probe the extremities of man's knowledge. So I will begin:

1. Have you, Lloyd, ever felt the desire to own a furry hot water bottle in the shape of a womble?
2. Is Rockford a relative of the Dunlop man?
3. Why don't Thing On A Spring go and something off.
4. Why can't we have a female reviewer to add that sensual feminine touch which ZZAP! so sadly lacks.
5. Is there a male barber in Ludlow (from the captions of Riggers (ie: Julian Rignall) it seems there isn't.
6. Is the Compunet offer of a free modem when you subscribe to it for one year still valid.
7. Why does at least one boring sheep have to ask in ZZAP! Rrap each edition why games are so crap these days, or why ZZAP! needs to have adverts?
8. Why won't my extra, extra, stunning cassette which I got with the last issue, load, it did cost me fifty of my hard earned pennies.
9. Why is Adrian Kingsten talking about strange fashions in Issue 26 – Joystick wear? Sounds a bit uncomfortable, personally I only wear pressure pads and roller balls.
10. Why don't you supply the full addresses of anyone who criticises ZZAP! 64, then me and my hit-men could go and mash their brains up with some milk and butter.

Finally I would like to say how glad I am to see the Terminal Man back and in full action.

Carry on your undoubtedly brilliant work for ever and ever. May you be blessed by a thousand Gods.

Mike Nield, Cheshire

1) I used to have one but it rusted over
2) not that I know of
3) because he and Rockford are good mates . . .
4) we use the secretaries
5) as you guessed . . .
6) no
7) Lord knows
8) it does if you load the right side
9) kinky you
10) don't forget to add pepper and nutmeg . . .
And I'm glad you're glad!
LM

BORED OF BENWICKSHIRE

Dear Lloyd,
I'm feeling bored at the moment so I thought I might as well write to ZZAP! to voice my 'growing despair' at reviewing.

First of all, well done Julian for keeping up the standard of the tips section – the best in any mag.

Now I've said that, I'm going to get moaning. What's the matter with you? (Not you Lloyd, Mr Hedge Hog features and his grovelling band of zombies who submit to reviewing any game as long as they give the wrong marks). How can marks vary so much from mag to mag? Playability I can easily understand but – well, let's take *Paperboy* for example – *C&VG* gives it 10 – equivalent of 100 percent for graphics and ZZAP! doles out a measly 48 percent. Another Elite game, *1942*, received similar marks on both sides. ZZAP! appear unfairly (or maybe fairly but it doesn't seem that way) biased against Elite, who must be wondering what they have done wrong.

Oh yeah, just to rub it in, ZZAP! – 'A dull, second rate conversion . . . ' *C&VG* – 'Well executed, rush out and buy it now – you won't be sorry!'

Ahem blush (blush again) – *Paperboy* is a great game. Elite have delivered.

Let's get on to more interesting stuff. Can we have more 50p demo tapes – great! It would be a very good idea if you started a regular chart – you know, the Top 20 as compiled by Gallup – How about it? Bring back the Challenge, reviewer vs reader please. And can we have more cut price offers. *Get back Liddon* – the best reviewer of the lot. Ah well, I'm getting bored now, so I expect you did long ago. Print this letter or else I'll melt down your Hermes and send it to *CU* to be turned into spoons and other useless equipment.

Douglas Mackencie, Benwickshire

I've lost count of the amount of times I've said that opinions will differ between magazines, as indeed they will between reviewers – obviously we all agreed over 1942 *and disagreed over* Paperboy. *However, three people confirmed their opinion at ZZAP!, whilst only one person's opinion was heard at* C&VG, *which might make some difference. Added to that, the* C&VG *reviewer has to take into account different machine formats of any game – and that, too, could alter the reviewer's overall opinion of the game.*

More demo tapes seem likely enough in the future. We're still opposed to running sales charts because they don't really seem to reflect what's actually happening in the market place. The Challenge is under firm consideration – see the ZZAPtionnaire results in this issue. Gary Liddon is back (though not as a reviewer), and CU *already have enough spoons and other useless equipment.*
LM

WHERE ARE THE LETTERS?

Dear Lloyd,
What's happened to your pages? In the June issue I counted nine letters! Are people not writing to you any more? Also the magazine this month has only 98 pages . . . don't worry I'm not going to start waffling on about 'this magazine is going downhill' etc, especially as you've included an ace demo tape on the front, the 'mix-e-load' thingy is great! I spent ages trying to load *Thalamusic* until I realised it was an audio cassette! Two days after the release of ZZAP! I had to wander around the shops for ages trying to find a copy, as all the shops had sold out! You definitely must have an offer like this again.

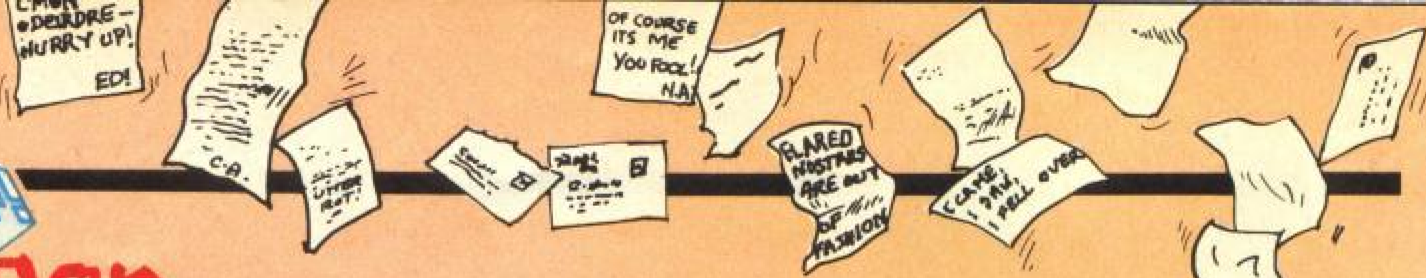
Where can I find a modem, I haven't seen them anywhere? Could you please give me the address of the manufacturer or can I order them from you?

David Shepherd, N Yorks

People are still writing in their droves, David, but there's one main reason why The Rrap has been slightly shorter recently, and that, to be honest, is that so many letters go on about the same subject, so either I do a 'Points Of View' style compilation, or just choose one or two to print.

We had several returned cassettes from people who failed to load the music side!

As to modems, I'm afraid I can't really help you. You're not likely to find any in high street chain stores, but Laskys in London might be helpful. The other contact is Compunet, who do their own modems, and their phone number is 01 965 8866. We don't sell any hardware on mail order.
LM



ZZAP! RRAP

AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW

Dear ZZAP!
Flicking through an old ZZAP! I came upon an advert for *Tubular Bells*. In the advert was a quote, which was said to have come from ZZAP! The quote was 'alternative entertainment at its best'. As I remember it, the ZZAP! review said 'if this had better music and was more interactive then it *could have been* alternative entertainment at its best'.

Surely this is not legal, as it completely changes the meaning. Come to think of it, the *Bombjack II* advert claimed it could be called a Jack Attack. Isn't the name copyright, as a *Jack Attack* was released. You gave it 54 percent Overall and later said it was a must in your games to buy for Christmas. Weird.

To answer a question put by Gary Penn in the *Repton III* review (what happened to I and II), they were actually released for the BBC and Electron some time ago. These games are very similar to *Repton II* and were released a long time ago. Therefore, it was a bit unkind to call *Repton III* a *Boulderdash* clone.

Finally, Andrew Braybrook says that Superdupahackem Mk 999 still can't do Uridium, ah well, he's bought a cheap one, because mine can. In fact, I have successfully transferred from tape to disk *Alleykat*, *Uridium*, *Sanxion*, *Iridis Alpha* and *Terra Cresta* – you know, all the anti-cartridge ones (of course they're all for my personal use, otherwise it would be illegal). Ah well Andrew that pays you back for that 5610 accelerator thing that I fell for.

I really enjoy reading ZZAP! I agree with Rob Hubbard it's things like the ZZAP! sample tape that makes us lucky to be ZZAP! readers.

C Place, Chester

I'm not sure of the strict legal position of using carefully selected bits of reviews – it's certainly highly unethical if the real meaning of the original quote is turned around the other way, but it's very often done, particularly with West End plays!

LM

AH HAH, I HEAR YOU CRY

Dear Lloyd,
I would like to put pen to paper regarding the complete disregard of software houses toward C128 owners. I've owned one of these fine machines for many months along with a 1570 disk drive, and anticipated titles being available for it.

Have I purchased a white elephant? Because it seems to me that the C128 is being ignored and software houses are more intent now on producing software for the minority who have the resources to buy an Amiga.

Ah hah, I hear you cry, C128 owners can still use the abundant C64 software. True! But that's hardly the point. Anyway not all C64 software works with the C128, one such instance is *Elite* which, while working fine with a 1541 disk drive, will not load on a 1570 disk drive – so here I am with £18 of software doing nothing. Even if software houses enhanced old titles to work in C128 mode it would be a step in the right direction. Imagine what *Elite* would be like with 128K of memory at its disposal instead of 64K.

It's true of most adventure games too. A new release called *Guild of Thieves* is available for C64 or Amiga – again the C128 is left out. There are only three titles I know of that run in C128 mode, *Music Maker 128*, *Kik Start 128*, and *Gunship* (disk). So software houses, please take note and don't leave the C128 to go the same way as the Plus 4 – on the scrapheap.

Richard Walker, London

I remember at the time of their release, that pundits thought the Plus 4 and the C128 were a peculiar direction for Commodore to take, with the 64 still highly popular, and more powerful machines like the Amiga round the corner. I'm not decrying the C128's merits, but I suspect most software companies also thought it an odd move, and failed to respond by producing compatible software. The situation is similar to that of the Spectrum 128K machine, except that step was required, and software is being designed to utilise the extra memory. I can't say whether or not you've purchased a white elephant, but I suspect you might have in terms of seeing much software specifically for your machine. Of course, you're not alone in your complaint, as the next letter proves . . .

LM

KNUCKLES RRAPPED

Dear ZZAP!
I wrote because I feel I must say the following about ZZAP! Rraps.

1. Why do you fill valuable space up with stupid letters about 'how crap the following reviews are', I mean it must have sunk into even the thickest skull that it's a matter of taste. Come on how many more times must it be said.?
2. Those who think Mr Penn is giving games a hard time! So what's wrong with that? I happen to agree with him (well, most of the time).
3. Can we have more good letters, ones which are interesting or have good ideas about the reviewing system etc. Please more letters like 'Paranoid'.
4. Have you noticed all the grovelling people do, just to get their letters printed! 'I've been reading ZZAP! since Issue One . . . etc.' Okay, I expect a few people have but I doubt everyone who puts that in their letter is being entirely truthful.
5. Why do you print letters slagging off poor old *CU*. I know it isn't as good as ZZAP! but do I keep writing in saying so?

Anyway keep up the good work, (whoops, let that one slip).

P Matthews, Stevenage

I am merely a vessel, ringing with the wisdom of ZZAP! readership, obliged to print what people say, no matter how harsh, unkind, thoughtless, stupid or downright wonderful it may be – that's the type of guy I am. What do you say?

LM

DIAMOND FLASH BACK

Dear Lloyd,
With reference to the Jack Diamond argument, could I take you back to the heady days when CRASH was but a baby and its only main rival, other than *Sinclair User*, was a magazine called *Your Spectrum*, remember that far back? Good. Correct me if I'm wrong, but *Your Spectrum* used Joe Public to review all its games.

How did this work, you ask yourself? Well a registered user group was sent a tape full of games each month, and each member was given a game to review. These were compiled and sent back to *Your Spectrum*. How do I know this? Well my user group was chosen to do such a review – this was in the heavy days of *Trashman* (Wow!) and classic games like *Chukie Egg*!

Anyway, Lloyd, the system is possible, but I must say that the drawbacks would outweigh the advantages considerably. Anyway keep up the good work at ZZAP! and I'll see you around.

Mark Manning, Gloucester

In fact Your Spectrum *(now* Your Sinclair*) started out life at exactly the same time as CRASH, and they changed around their reviewing system pretty quickly to take in User Groups like yours. The fact that the system wasn't in operation for very long probably indicates the problems they had with it, as we would have, had we done things that way. Thanks for the memory . . .*

LM

NOT FIORD BY ENTHUSIASM

Dear ZZAP!,
I love you because you test games for the C128. But it seems like nobody wants to produce games for my computer. I just don't understand it. I read in *Commodore User* that the C128 is the fourth best selling machine in the whole world. Then I read *Computer & Video Games* about an excellent game from my favourite supplier Konami, for the MSX 128. Does MSX sell better than the C128? If not then what's wrong with the fantastic CBM 128. I mean those who say that 64 games are 128 games are totally mad. If suppliers think we 128 owners get enough games with the 64 then they misunderstand. Please Konami, or somebody else, produce games for the 128. Thank you ZZAP! for a very good magazine.

Oyvind Grimstad, Norway

Enough of such idle banter, it's to work I must, gardening trowel at the ready. If you've any useful thoughts on composting, density of peat to soil composition, pH values of acid ground, or indeed anything to do with Commodore software, hardware or lawn mower blades, write to me, LLOYD MANGRAM, ZZAP! RRAP, BO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB, and let me know how your gladioli are doing.

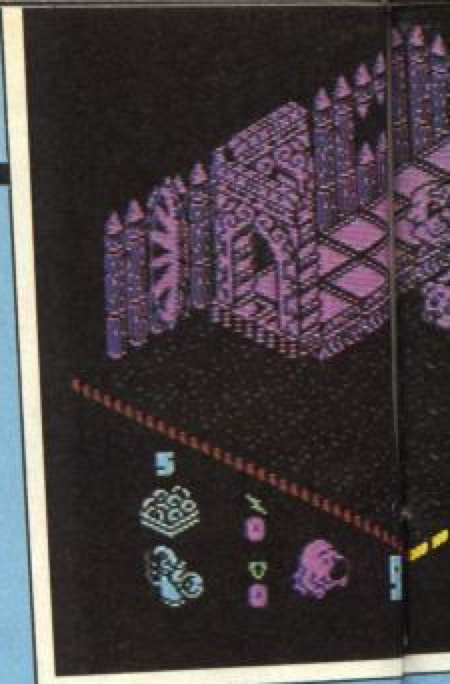

ZYNAPS
ZYNAPS; the most imaginative sci-fi shoot-em-up game yet, from Hewson. It has a combination of 140 possible story sequences to fire your imagination. Zynaps is a game constructed like a comic book, with three chapters and four episodes of mind-blowing action. Each part gets tougher until our hero faces the final conflict . . . It's the battle to end all battles!
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ZZAP! TEST

HEAD OVER HEELS

Ocean, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

● **A staggeringly addictive puzzle-solving journey through over 300 locations in the Blacktooth Empire**



Head and Heels are two spies from the planet Freedom, travelling about on each other's shoulders and using their individual assets and capabilities to right wrongs and solve mysteries.

Head is the more experienced of the pair, having cut his teeth in the famous Calypso Daisy Massacre affair (he was the secret agent who caused a scandal by being found in the Princess' private quarters). Heels is a comparative newcomer to the force, joining after his retirement from the Universal Olympic Upside-Down Tightrope Walking Team. Head can jump great heights and turn in mid air, while Heels is a flyer on the ground but not so good a jumper.

And what a cracker of a case the boys have this time! They've been set the task of liberating the enslaved planets of the Blacktooth Empire by rescuing five stolen crowns and returning them to Freedom.

But wait a minute – you need to know the background to the Blacktooth Empire. This tyrannical dynasty is a group of five planets; Safari, Penitentiary, Egyptus, Bookworld and Blacktooth itself . . . but more about these later. The evil empire is ruled by a cruel despot who has now set his colonial sights on Freedom.

Knowing that attack is the best form of defence, the Elder Freedomites decided to send in a team to cause unrest among the enslaved planets, and hopefully cause the destruction of the entire empire. The only feasible way to accomplish this task is to find the five hidden crowns which are scattered about the empire, and mobilising the downtrodden populations behind them.

Having just won Freedom's 'Spy Team Of The Year' contest for the 37th year running, Head and Heels were chosen to travel to Blacktooth and carry out this mission.

However this plan went wrong and the pals were captured by the wicked ruler's minions. They're now imprisoned in separate cells, divided by an unscalable wall. For some strange reason, there's a teleport pad in each cell so that the pair can begin their escape attempt – but can they get back together and complete their mission?

Help comes in the unlikely form of stuffed white bunny rabbits, who bestow special favours on our two heroes to temporarily enhance their powers. The rabbits come in four basic varieties: extra life bunnies, invulnerability bunnies, jump higher bunnies and go faster bunnies. If the pair are connected when a rabbit is encountered, they are both credited with the extra power – however, if Heels picks up a go faster bunny or Head picks up a jump bunny the effects are wasted.

Reincarnation Fish are another odd ally. Eat them and they acquire your personality and traits, so that when a game finishes it can be restarted from the point where the fish was consumed. Just one thing though, before setting down for a meal make sure that the fish is alive – dead fish are highly poisonous.

The Evil Emperor's henchmen come in a variety of guises. Jars of poisonous Marmite abound, as do lethally mobile police bollards and strange propeller-headed vermin. Stranger still are the Daleks which roam the floors, disguised as Elephants, Chimpanzees, Fruit Machines and even Prince Charles – depending on which world they inhabit. The deadliest threat comes in the form of vicious homing droids who hover in for the kill at great speed.

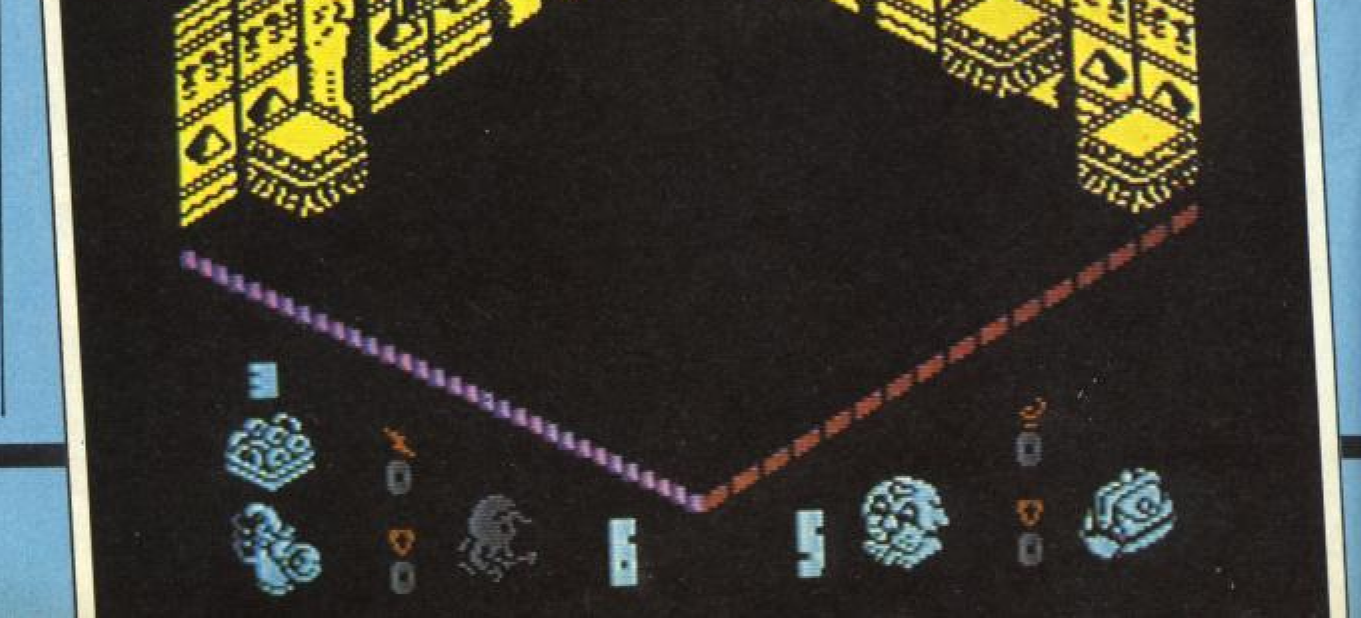
Unlike 007, Head and Heels have no licence to kill. Instead Head collects doughnuts which he fires at his opponents through a deadly air-horn. The stunned creature then has to spend the next few minutes licking sticky dough from his face, and can be avoided at a leisurely pace. Supplies of doughnuts are found in trays of six, scattered around the five worlds.

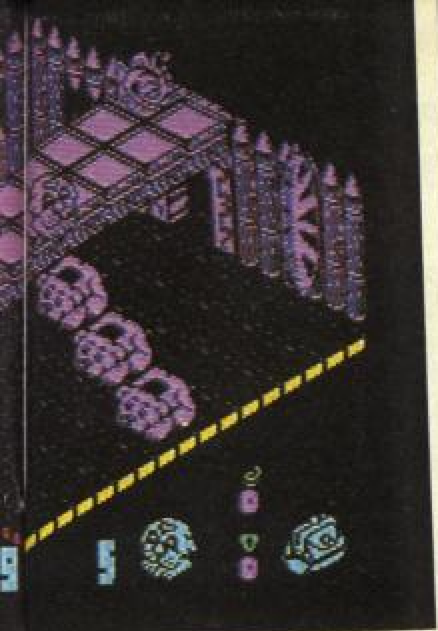
Heels always wanted a doughnut horn as well, but Head is the senior member of the team and he doesn't trust him with weapons

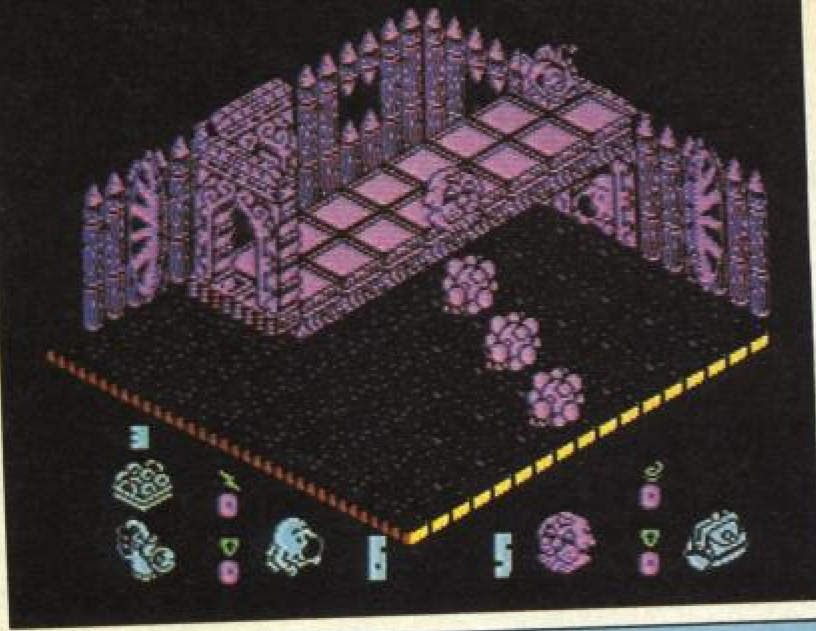
From the very first go this had me hooked . . . and a fortnight later I'm still itching to get back to it. Head Over Heels is quite simply the finest 64 program so far this year. The graphics are outstanding and portray a solid and totally believable alien environment. Head and Heels themselves are superb characters – the sort that would make a successful cartoon series. The five surreal alien planets offer plenty of surprises and are filled with puzzles, some of which seem illogical or completely impossible to solve. However, the answer is always staring at you in the face, and usually dawns hours after you've switched off the computer! The gameplay is incredibly rewarding, and finally getting a crown and managing to escape is a great feeling. Superb stuff – buy it!



► Parting is such sweet sorrow, as the dynamic duo must split up to negotiate this aerial obstacle course







▶ The hush puppies provide Heels with a safe stairway . . . but one sight of Head and they disappear in a shower of bubbles

– after all you can't have anybody running around shooting doughnuts all over the place. Poor old Heels has to make do with being the bag man, an unglamorous but important job. Because he carries the bag, Heels is the only one who can pick up and carry the items necessary for solving a number of puzzles. Unfortunately the bag has a hole in it and cannot carry objects from room to room.

Sleeping Hush Puppies lie about the landscape forming bridges and platforms (like Head and Heels, these are natives of Freedom). Long ago these passive canine footrests developed an intense hatred of Head's ancestors and now they disappear whenever Head enters the room. Nobody knows where they go, but they refuse to return until Head is well out of sight – a situation which causes more than its fair share of problems.

Exploring a castle may appear to be an easy task, but in this case all is certainly not what it seems. Platforms disappear at awkward moments, targets appear to be tantalisingly out of reach, seemingly innocuous floors are fatal to the touch and innocent-looking creatures turn nasty at the drop of a hat. Therefore most of the 300 odd rooms present another puzzle to be solved before progress can be resumed.

The boys travel from room to room and from planet to planet by means of the legendary Blacktooth teleport system. This is a somewhat deceptive mode of transport however, as some of the teleporters work in a single direction only – often transporting the user back by many rooms.

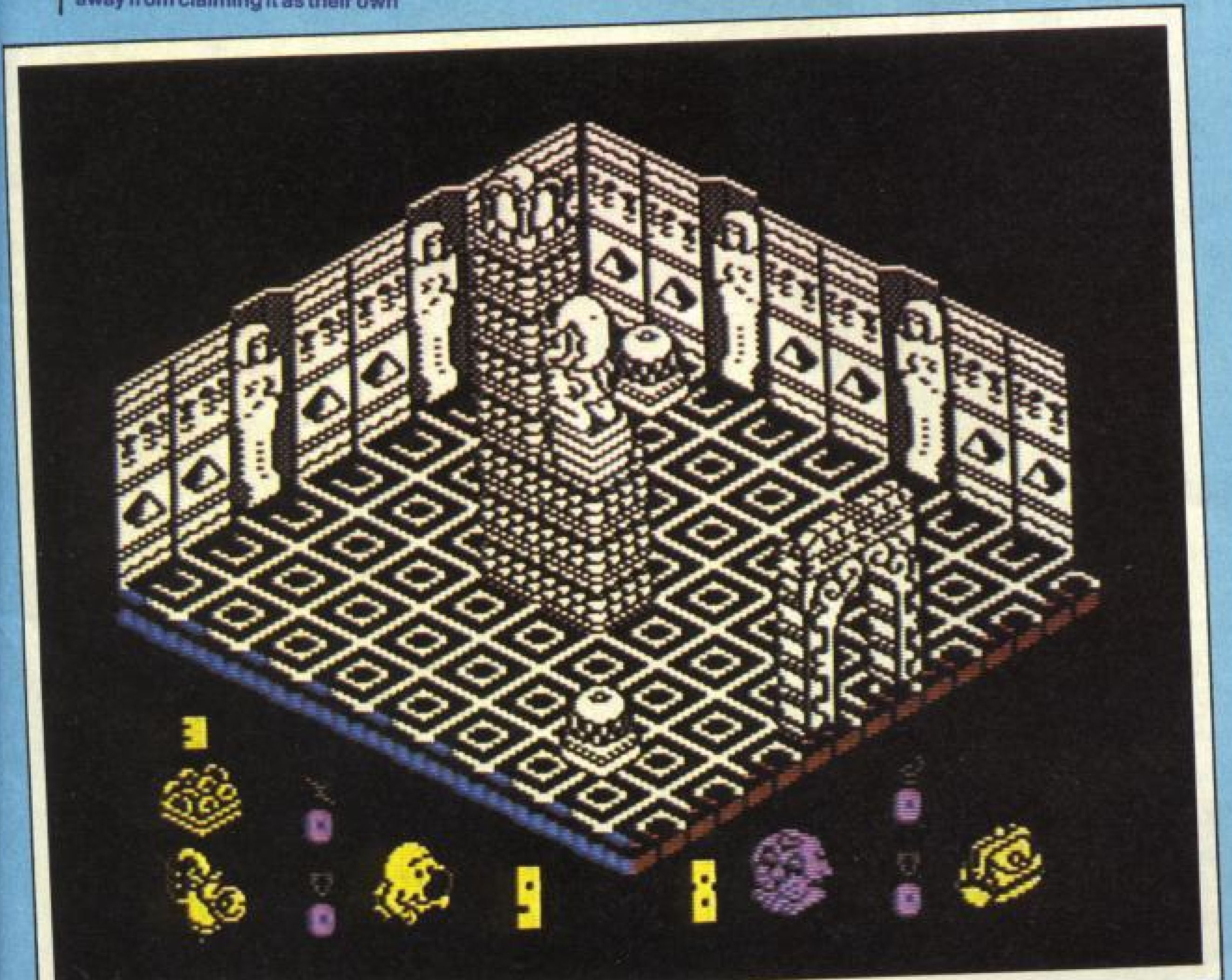
If all of this action seems a little too much to begin with, the quest can be temporarily forgotten, and an escape to Freedom attempted instead. Don't be fooled into believing that this task is an easy one though – remember that Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose.

Oh yes, and now for the planets . . .

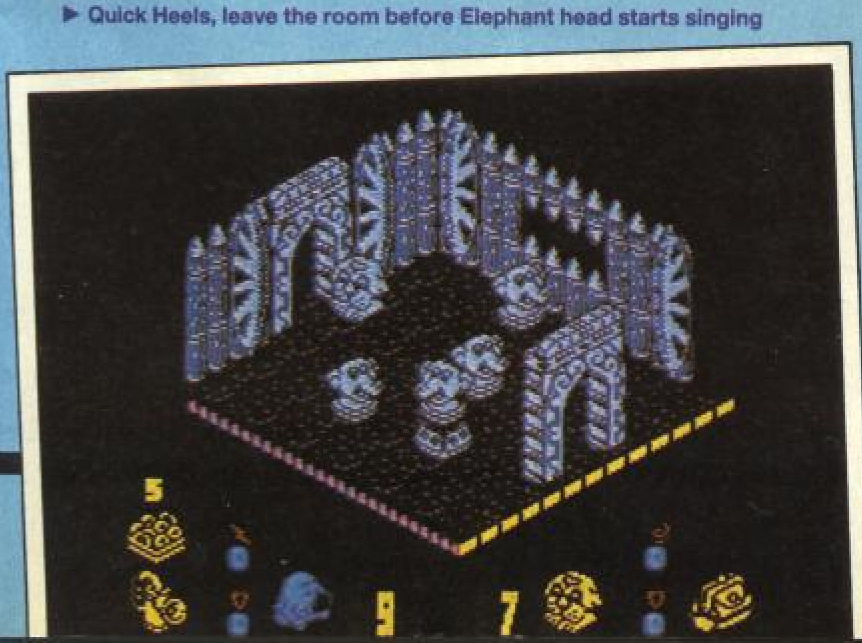
EGYPTUS

A travelling space crew once returned to Blacktooth carrying tales of a primitive planet whose inhabitants wrapped corpses in cloth and buried them in pyramids.

▶ Working together the boys have found the Egyptus crown, and are one step away from claiming it as their own



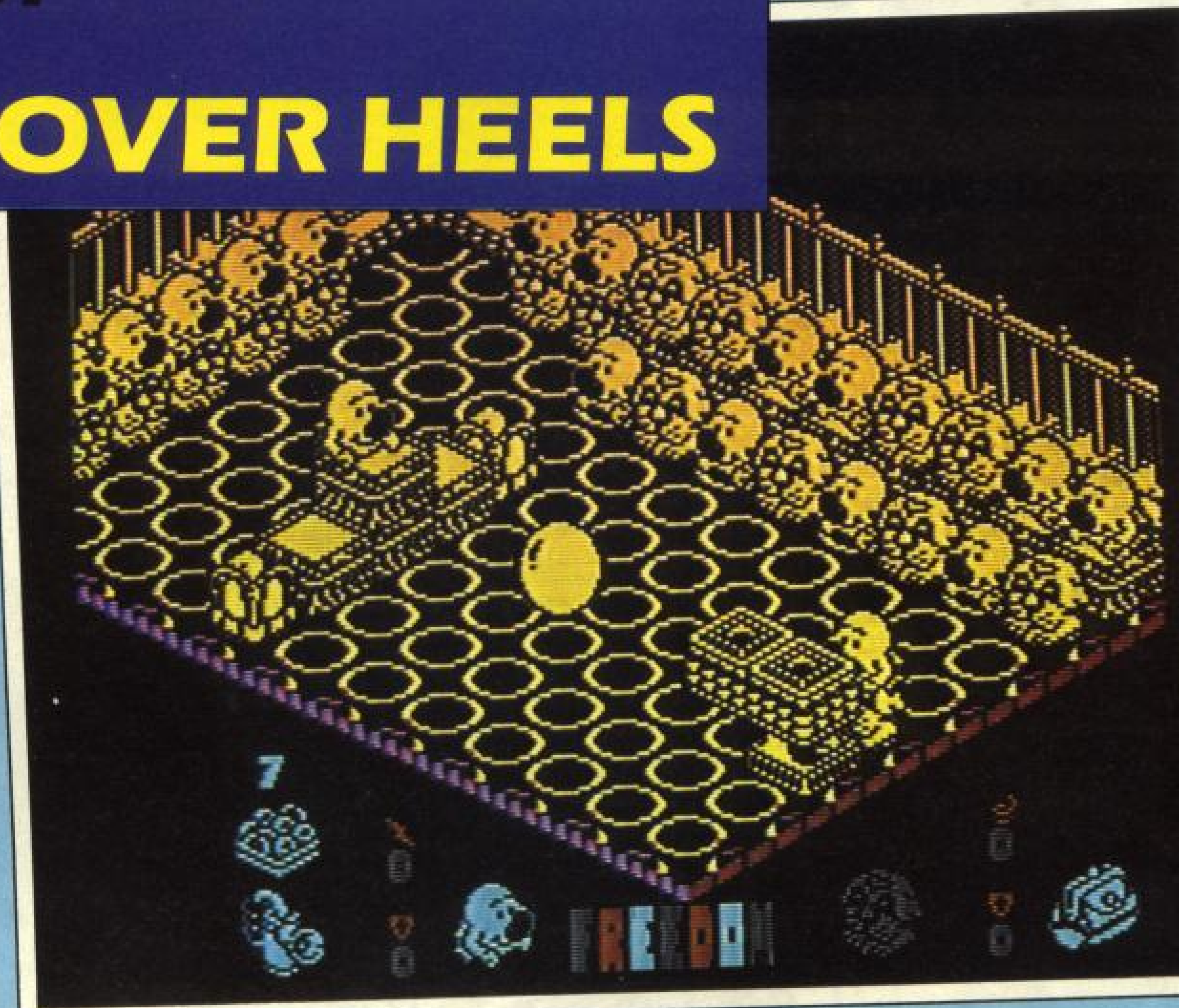
▶ Quick Heels, leave the room before Elephant head starts singing





Well it's finally arrived: the first Gold Medal of the year, and my first as a ZZAP! reviewer – and it's a good 'un! The programmers have achieved a considerable coup for Ocean in managing to convert what is considered to be *the* arcade adventure on the Spectrum to the 64 with almost no loss of speed, clarity, or playability. The graphics are extremely pretty, and the feeling of actually existing in three-dimensions within the machine is overwhelming. As for the game itself, it's very, very addictive and has kept certain members of the team if not quiet, then at least out of my way for several days now. The only possible fault I can find is the lack of a game save option, which is partially redeemed by the ability to begin from the last 'reincarnation fish' encountered in the previous game. If you like logic puzzles and have a couple of months to spare, you'll go head over heels over Head Over Heels **– Groan.**

HEAD OVER HEELS



Let me start by saying that this is one of the finest computer games that I've ever seen. It's infuriatingly playable, and at the risk of abusing a very old cliche . . . it provides hours and hours of fun. The series of mind-taxing puzzles combined with the necessity for pixel-perfect positioning means that no two games are ever totally alike, and the fact that there is more than one way to solve most puzzles adds greatly to the playability. The programmers have also succeeded in a purely visual way. The two main characters have a beautiful cartoon-like quality, and even develop distinct personalities (for the record, Heels is my favourite). From a technical viewpoint, the slick use of the 3D format pushes back the frontiers of programming on the C64 – and only goes to show what could have been achieved in a number of other programs. Head Over Heels **is possibly *the* game of 1987, get your hands on a copy as quickly as possible.**



► Loaded down with two liberated crowns, Head has made it back to his pals on Freedom – unfortunately, poor old Heels didn't make it

The Emperor liked this idea, and rebuilt the capital city of one of the planets to remind him of it.

SAFARI

Covered in dense vegetation and filled with traps. Native Daleks resemble Monkeys and Elephants.

BOOK WORLD

Imagine a planet which consists entirely of one great library! What's more, all of its books are Western Novels – freaky eh?

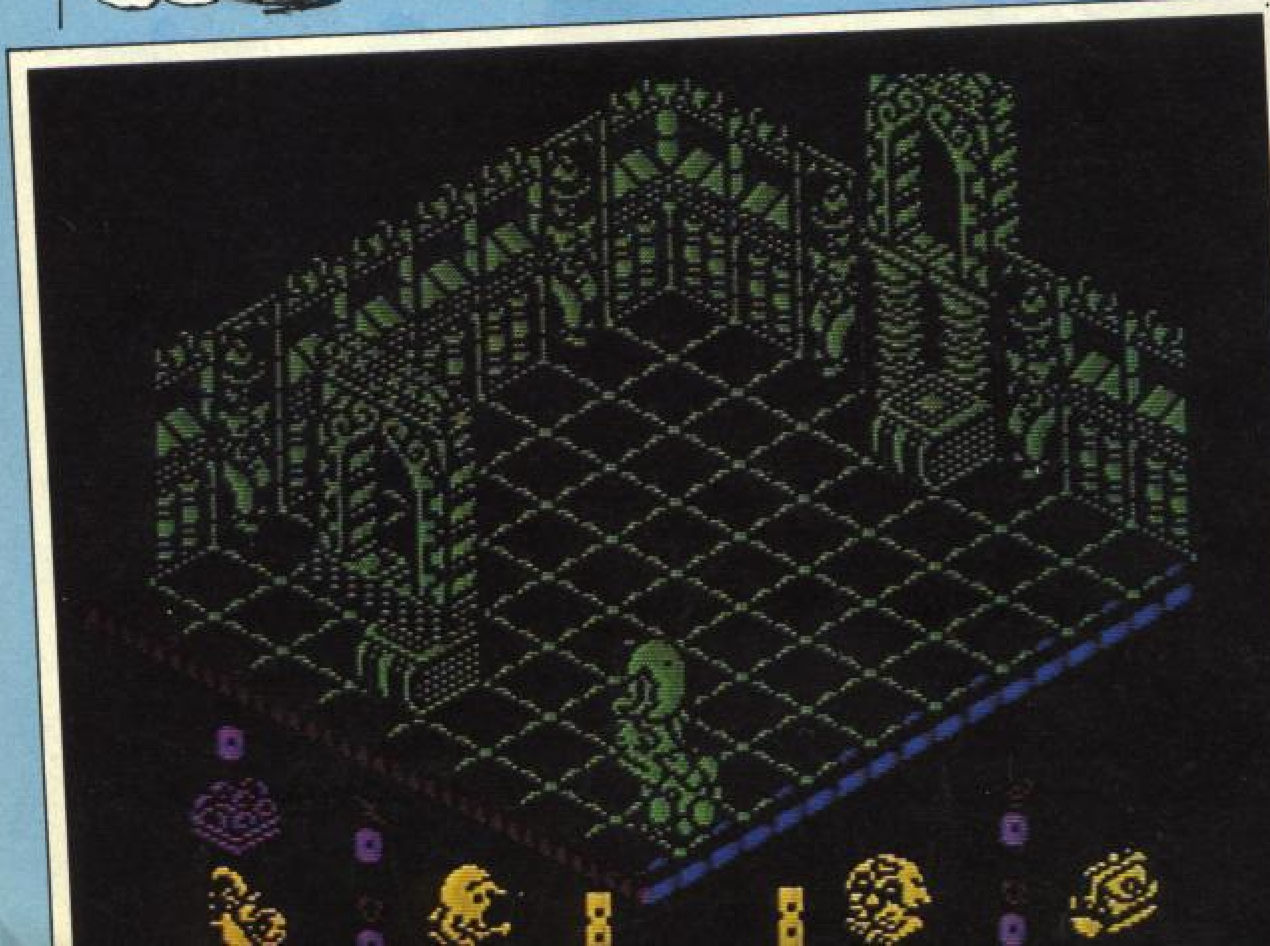
PENITENTIARY

Like all dictatorships, the Blacktooth empire needs masses of prison space to store its dissidents. The Emperor has solved this problem quite neatly by turning an entire planet into a concentration camp.

BLACKTOOTH

Last but not least comes the Emperor's home planet. Administrative centre to the empire and massive teleport terminal, it has all the best TV channels. This forbidding planet is also home to the Emperor's guardian, a deceptively mean character who provides what is probably the game's toughest obstacle.

► Oblivious to exploding encyclopedias, our heroes explore the treacherous library of Bookworld



PRESENTATION 98%
Excellent. A multitude of useful user-friendly options, superbly documented with the inclusion of an amusing scenario and informative instructions.

GRAPHICS 98%
Highly detailed and varied landscapes, populated by characters that are both amusing and believable.

SOUND 79%
Competent title tune, with a multitude of atmospheric jingles and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 96%
Beautifully designed with the player in mind, requiring a huge degree of dexterity, both mental and physical.

LASTABILITY 98%
Over 300 rooms to explore and many rewarding problems to solve.

OVERALL 98%
An all time classic – not to be missed for any reason.

AUTO DUEL

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MAX TORQUE

Bubble Bus, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

Max Torque puts you in the saddle of a powerful two-gear 500cc motorcycle, as you take on a field of computer controlled riders in a six stage race.

Initially the player chooses from a range of seven participants, each with different abilities – for example Bill Bullet's bike has a top speed of 250 mph, but is far less manoeuvrable than Jack Flash's 190 mph racer.

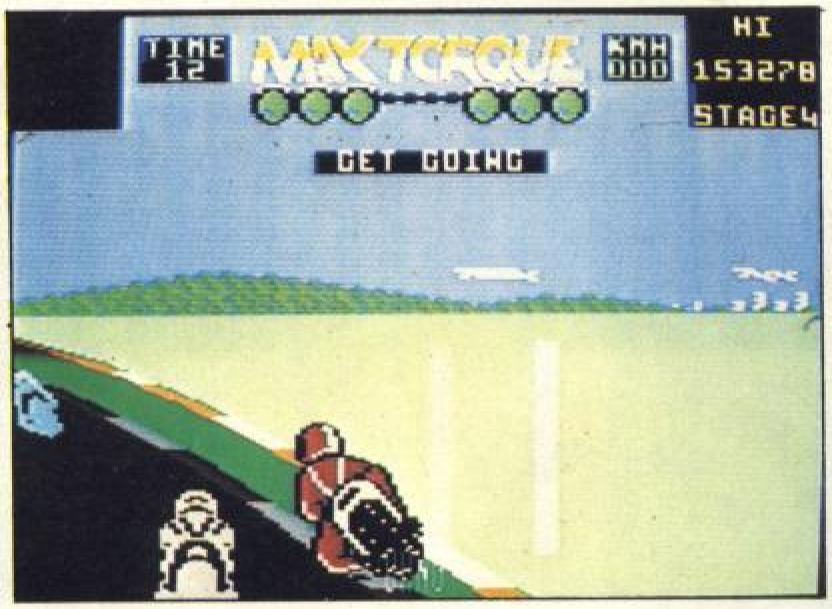
The race begins when the personality has been chosen, with the screen displaying an over-the-shoulder view of the action. An audible signal and green light start the contest, with a 60 second timer instantly beginning to tick down. Reaching the end of the stage resets the clock, giving the rider another 60 seconds to tackle the next – failure results in premature retirement.

Other riders are encountered



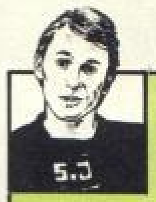
Although this isn't much to look at, it provides plenty of racing excitement. The main character is great, but it's a shame that his opponents are single colour sprites – if they were all as detailed the overall effect would be outstanding. The tricky control method takes a bit of getting used to, but perseverence is rewarded with the enjoyment of a high-speed burn around a fairly convincing race track. One slightly annoying feature is the sluggish braking system, but once again the answer is perseverence. The seven different bikers add extra challenge to an enjoyable race game which provides all the thrills and spills that Enduro Racer **failed to deliver.**

► **Scraping his knee, Max Torque narrowly avoids disaster**





Max Torque**'s graphics are excellent – even better than those of** Super Cycle**. Where this game loses out however, is in the playability stakes. The cycle is very hard to control, mainly due to the fact that the steering isn't self-centering, and consequently it is difficult to make any headway. Even when you do begin to master this method there is no realistic feeling of exhilaration as you zoom around the track. I feel that only the most fanatical of race game fans will like this.**



The control method used in Max Torque **is extremely sensitive, requiring copious practice before any distance is covered. The graphics are handled fairly well, with the track and backdrop moving smoothly and realistically, but this effect is marred by the poor characters.** Hang On **it ain't, but if you're in need of some fast (if not exactly furious) racing action, then** Max Torque **isn't such a bad buy.**

SPELLSEEKER

Bug Byte, £2.99 cass, joystick with keys

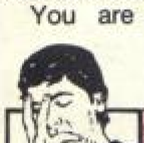
Ashlaa, the evil sorcerer lies hidden somewhere in the Magic Maze. It is imperative that he be killed, but he's well protected by the beasts which he has created to protect him.

You are the Spellseeker: a wizard with mercenary tendencies. The task of despatching the dark lord has fallen on your small but powerful shoulders.

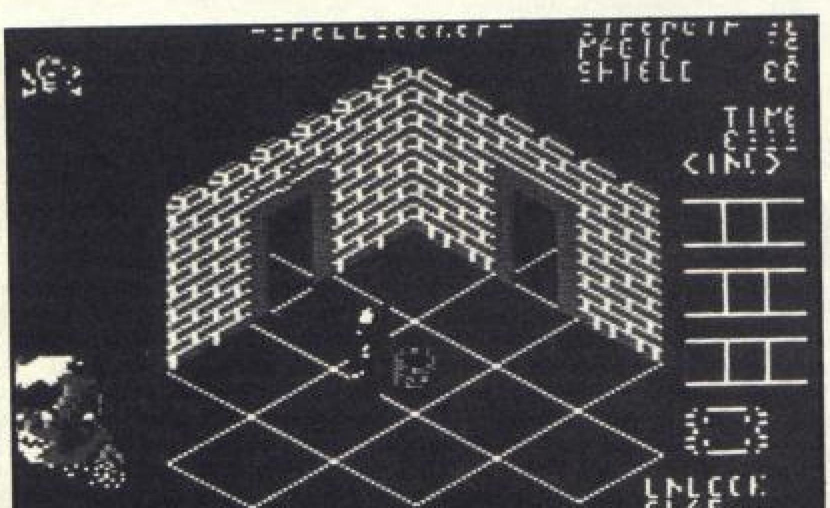
The interior of the Magic Maze is displayed in 3-D perspective, as Spellseeker makes his tortuous way through the labyrinth. Spellseeker is joystick controlled and is directed by a ninety-degree turn left or right and forward motion.

The maze is littered with danger. As well as Ashlaa and his witch ally, there are 35 other monsters to be dealt with or avoided, including skeletons, wraiths, snakes and goblins. All of these attack our hero by striking out, casting spells or even spitting poison. This aggression inflicts damage on Spellseeker and his strength rating is depleted depending on the monster confronted. Accordingly, the more ferocious the beast, the more it takes to defeat them. Our caped crusader has an array of spells to use against the monsters, accessed from a small menu system at the lower right of the screen.

Four types of well are encountered throughout the maze, and



This is a very plain and tediously simple arcade adventure. The control method leaves a lot to be desired, as turning through 180° is a slow process, and often leads to the death of your character. The layout of the playing area and the way that it is displayed on screen is very odd – whichever exit you leave a screen from, play begins again at the bottom left hand corner of the next. There are plenty of other games of this ilk around, I suggest you buy one of the better ones.





Spellseeker **is a rather poor attempt at a 3D Ultimate-style arcade adventure. The method used for creating each location is rapid but confusing: no matter which side of the screen you exit, you always enter the next location from the bottom left, the viewpoint of the room altering to suit. This is very disorienting and you really have to concentrate to avoid running around in circles. It also makes mapping the game a real task, which is necessary to actually make any progress. Graphically sparse, there is little urge to explore and this makes me feel that** Spellseeker **is doomed to remain in the Magic maze forever (otherwise known as the software shop).**

throughout the race, slowing your machine on contact. The sharp and twisting corners also pose a problem as the bike has to slow down to take them, otherwise it could skid off the track and into the fence – with a loss of time resulting as the rider remounts.

Sharper corners and more riders make the going tougher as the race progresses through the stages.

PRESENTATION 71%
Seven bikers to choose from, but a difficult control method.

GRAPHICS 60%
Poorly defined characters detract from the otherwise reasonable look.

SOUND 28%
The unrealistic whining sound doesn't really represent the growl of a 500cc engine.

HOOKABILITY 65%
A tricky control method requires some initial patience, but perseverance pays off in the end.

LASTABILITY 71%
The six tracks provide a stiff challenge, with the choice of bikers adding to the appeal.

OVERALL 70%
A competent and entertaining race game.

drinking from these can increase your strength or magic powers, cure any damage previously inflicted upon you or, should the well be poisonous, decrease your strength.

Travelling within the maze is accomplished more swiftly by use of the teleportation pads which are scattered about. Entering one of these sends Spellseeker to a different part of the maze to continue his quest.

PRESENTATION 40%
Seriously marred by the odd movement between rooms.

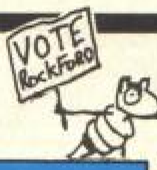
GRAPHICS 57%
Rapidly drawn, but lacking in detail and generally drab.

SOUND 15%
An annoying cacophony.

HOOKABILITY 49%
Easy to pick up and play, but very disorientating.

LASTABILITY 56%
Mildly entertaining but ultimately tiresome.

OVERALL 47%
Yet another addition to the ever-increasing line of average arcade adventures.



ELECTION

Virgin Games, £9.95 cass, joystick only

Many of you will have fond memories of recent General Election. Party political broadcasts every night, neighbours creeping about ripping down each others posters and politicians spreading unmentionable diseases among the infants of the land through mouth to mouth vote-catching. If you've ever fancied trying your hand at electioneering, but don't fancy all that serious stuff, *Election* may be just the game for you.

Taking the role of either Matcher (Conservative), Ninnock (Labour), Daniel Pauls (Idealist Party) or one of the Davids – Owing or Pig-Iron (Alliance), you attempt to guide your character to 10 Downing Street and become Prime Minister!

The game features 40 computer-controlled characters, including the main party candidates, who need to be canvassed for their votes. There are 199 votes to be gained: 39 belonging to the other binary participants and gained by careful persuasion, with the other 160 obtained by placing manifestos at specific positions within the 'country'.

This political power struggle takes place over a flick-screen landscape of 98 locations, featuring such unlikely locations as the land of Milk and Honey, Trendo's Cafe, Fleet Street – and of course the headquarters of all four political parties.

Your character is directed around via the joystick, and his or her actions manipulated by use of a menu system. This enables you to pick up and drop items, give items to other characters, ask people questions, order your followers about, canvass the public and slur the opposition – all the necessary traits of a good politician.

There are a variety of ways to reach Downing Street: you may decide to fight a clean battle, using your powers of persuasion, or attempt to win by destroying the credibility of your opponents. This route is quite dangerous though, as you also run the risk of getting slurred yourself.

Manifestos are encountered throughout your travels, and are picked up and dropped at your headquarters to adopt party colours. Picking them up again and taking them to one of the special named sites on the election map (supplied with the game) rewards you with 10 votes.

Other items are also encountered and picked up along the way. **Hope** and **Sincerity** boost your credibility, while **Gossip**, **Scam** and **Untruths** can be used to slur a fellow politician, and **Peerages**, **Rosettes**, **Knighthoods** and **Shares** are given to party minions as an incentive for them to work harder for the cause!

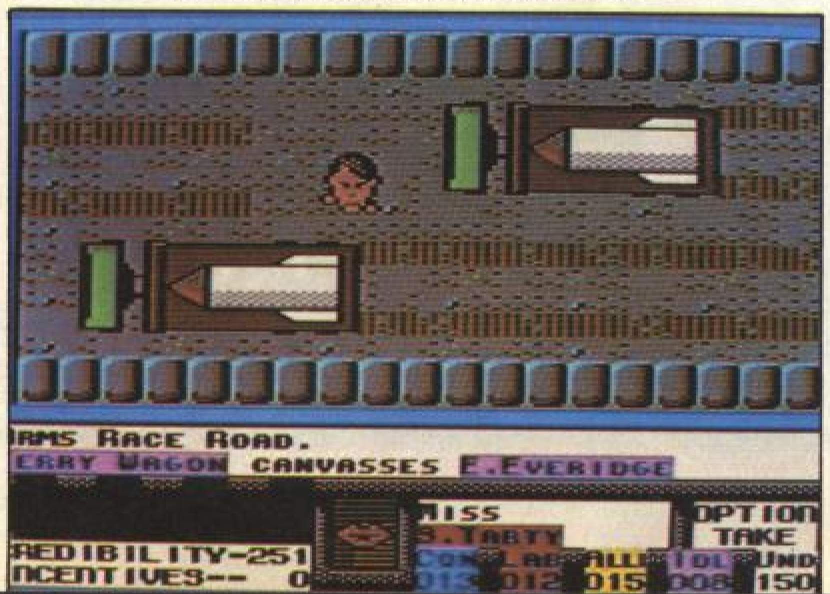
The screen displays your character and current surroundings, with information about your character's status displayed beneath. A message bar also warns of the goings-on of the other candidates, allowing you to plan your tactics.

The game ends when you have achieved an overall majority of 101 votes or more, and attained the lofty status of Prime Minister. Conversely, a particularly successful smear campaign against you may deplete your credibility rating to zero, at which point your political career comes to an untimely end.



Surely this should have been released quite a while before the 'real' election it if was going to have any appeal. With the election over now I can't see anybody wanting to go through the whole dull business all over again. If you take the random elements out of the 'real' election, it would turn out to be extremely boring and repetitive – and this is basically what the computer version turns out to be. There is no excitement and the whole canvassing and manifesto procedure is very tedious. Would you pay money to go through Election '87 all over again?

▶ **Mind those nuclear missiles as you cross arms race road**





I can't help thinking that Election **may not appeal too strongly to the masses, since it's hardly an adventure and less than an arcade game. On screen, it tends to appear more hectic than it actually is with messages rapidly flashing on and off and characters whizzing all over the place. The nine or so pages of instruction are also a little daunting. Nevertheless, it doesn't take too long to get to grips with, and once you're familiar with what's going on it provides a fun challenge. It is in fact a little over-complex, but if you fancy an alternative to the real-life Spitting Image puppets,** Election **gets my vote.**



Election **is a very unusual game, in both its looks and the way it plays. Mastering the control method and understanding the general concept of canvassing votes is tricky, but with plenty of practice it all becomes second nature. Even though the graphics and sound are nothing special, there's something in the action that's strangely addictive, and I came back to it constantly to see if I could better my canvassing skills. There's plenty of depth, and the action should keep a player happy for quite a few weeks – and I don't think the fact that it's missed the election ruins its appeal, it's a good game in its own right.**

PRESENTATION 82%
Complicated but informative instructions, and comprehensive on-screen information.

GRAPHICS 64%
Highly unusual, with great sprites and garish surreal backdrops.

SOUND 27%
A few uninspired jingles and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 56%
Difficult to pick up and play due to the strange controls and weird gameplay.

LASTABILITY 65%
Once you get to grips with the concept, there's plenty to keep you engrossed.

OVERALL 66%
An original and addictive arcade adventure which won't appeal to many.

ZZAP! TEST

THING BOUNCES BACK

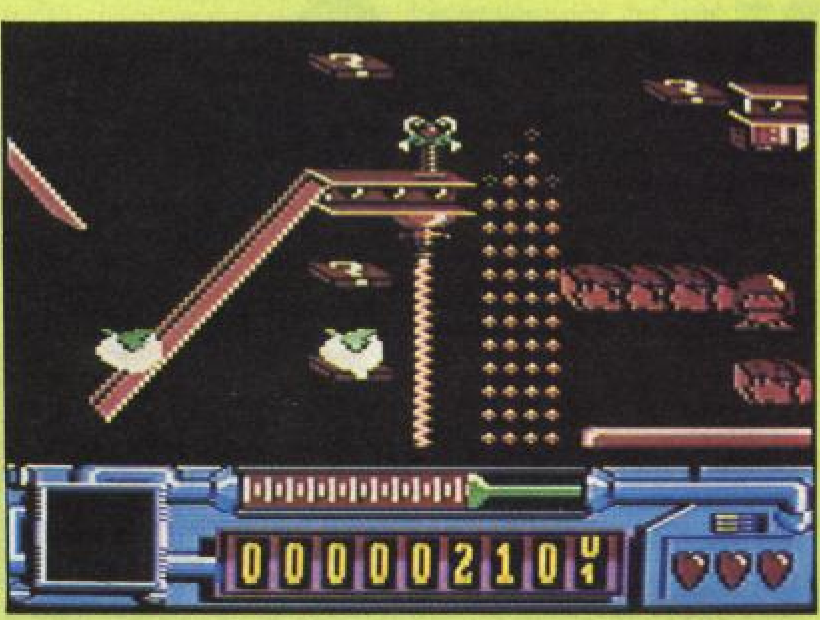
Gremlin Graphics, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick or keys

Two years after his monumental battle against the Evil Toy Goblin and his nasty toys, Thing On A Spring (ZZAP!'s alternative margin hero) is back in a new adventure.

This time the action takes place in an enormous 11 section factory complex run by the goblin. This vile troublemaker is back, and is using the factory to produce a huge army of evil toys. Thing is here to close down the production line and bring the evil goblin to justice, a task which requires him to enter every section of the factory and recover the tape, floppy disk, listing paper and ROM found in each.



Thing's back after a two year delay, and I'm glad to say the wait has been worth it! What's most impressive about Thing Bounces Back **is its sheer depth of gameplay. A route around each of the 11 large scrolling sections has to be worked out, which means negotiating an awful lot of hazards and traps in each – a task which should perplex even the toughest of video players for weeks. The factory is full of strange machinery, some that appeared in** Thing on a Spring**, like slides, elevators and jumps mats, and some new stuff, such as the ventilator shafts, pipes and mystery plates. The graphics are unusual but effective, with garish colour schemes on some of the backdrops and cartoonesque sprites (Thing's new red nose looks a bit silly, though). The sound effects are brilliant, although the music varies from good on the title screen, to horribly screechy when Thing enters the ventilator system.** Thing Bounces Back **is a worthy successor to** Thing on a Spring**, and should be looked up by anyone brave enough to undertake the tough challenge it offers.**



► Complete with bright red nose, the MkII Thing poses for a picture

Each section comprises a scrolling area filled with a jumble of platforms, elevators, lifts, pipes, hazards and traps, as well as the evil goblin's hordes. Thing uses the elevators, lifts, pipes and his own spring to move about, with this movement resulting in the use of oil, represented as a bar which diminishes to zero. Contact with the goblin's minions also depletes oil supplies, so Thing jumps on them to kill them. Thing has three oil supplies at the beginning of the quest, with the mission ending when all have been used.

Scattered liberally throughout each location are 'mystery plates' which reveal a surprise object when touched. Some yield bonus points, others give extra oil, bonus lives or little springs which are used as weapons against the goblin's minions. Others conceal deadly weights which plummet down on Thing's head if he doesn't move away quickly.

There are also the four vital pieces of equipment dotted around. When they've been collected, Thing uses an exit port to enter the scrolling ventilation shafts which link all 11 sections of the factory. Once inside the system he tumbles helplessly, and has to be guided to an exit port before his oil runs out.

Sometimes touching a mystery plate sets off a trap, shutting off parts of the screen. In this situation Thing either has to quit the screen, or exit before all four pieces of equipment are collected. When he returns, all mystery plates conceal weights, making progress very difficult.

Defeating the Evil Goblin requires not only an understanding of factory's workings, but also the ability to avoid the many hazards and traps which litter the environment. When all the components have finally been found, the Evil Goblin's plan can be thwarted and the threat to the safety of toyland averted.

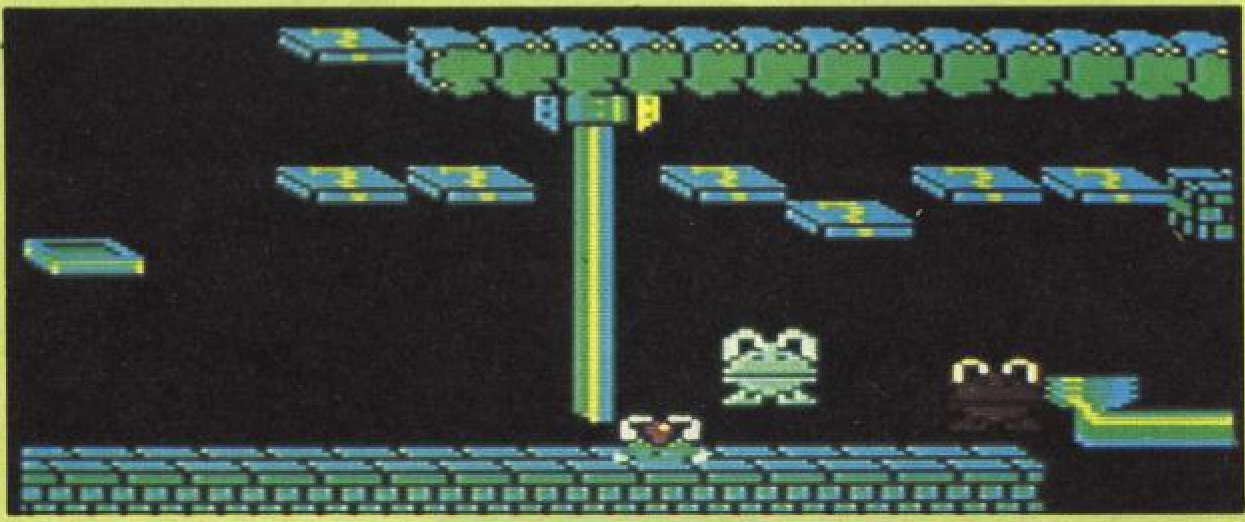


Although Thing II is very original, well put together and generally highly polished, it doesn't grab me at all. The frenzied speed coupled with a weird control system means that it is easy to move around without thinking, and that can quite often get you stuck in some little section of the playing and cost you the game – infuriating ain't the word. The ventilator section is a neat touch, but it becomes a pain in the neck after a relatively short time.



I have to admit to being no great fan of the original Thing on a Spring **– I found it far too frustrating. With this second venture into the surreal world of the springy superhero, Gremlin have almost fulfilled the promise of the first. Although more playable, however,** Thing Bounces Back **lacks the character of the original: the graphics lacking the cartoon quality of** Thing on a Spring **and the redesigned sprite doesn't appeal as much. Not a bad buy, but beware: it's exceptionally devious and will have you tearing your hair out just as much as the original, although for different reasons.**

► Oh no! Careless Thing has let his oil run out



PRESENTATION 83%
A pleasant title screen and excellent in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 84%
Effective, colourful backdrops, and amusing cartoon-style sprites.

SOUND 75%
Three tunes and some brilliant spot effects complement the action.

HOOKABILITY 92%
Confusing at first, but the action is addictive from the start.

LASTABILITY 83%
With its large map to explore and wealth of hazards to overcome, there's plenty to keep a player happy for weeks.

OVERALL 86%
An unusual and challenging arcade adventure which is a worthy sequel to *Thing on a Spring*.


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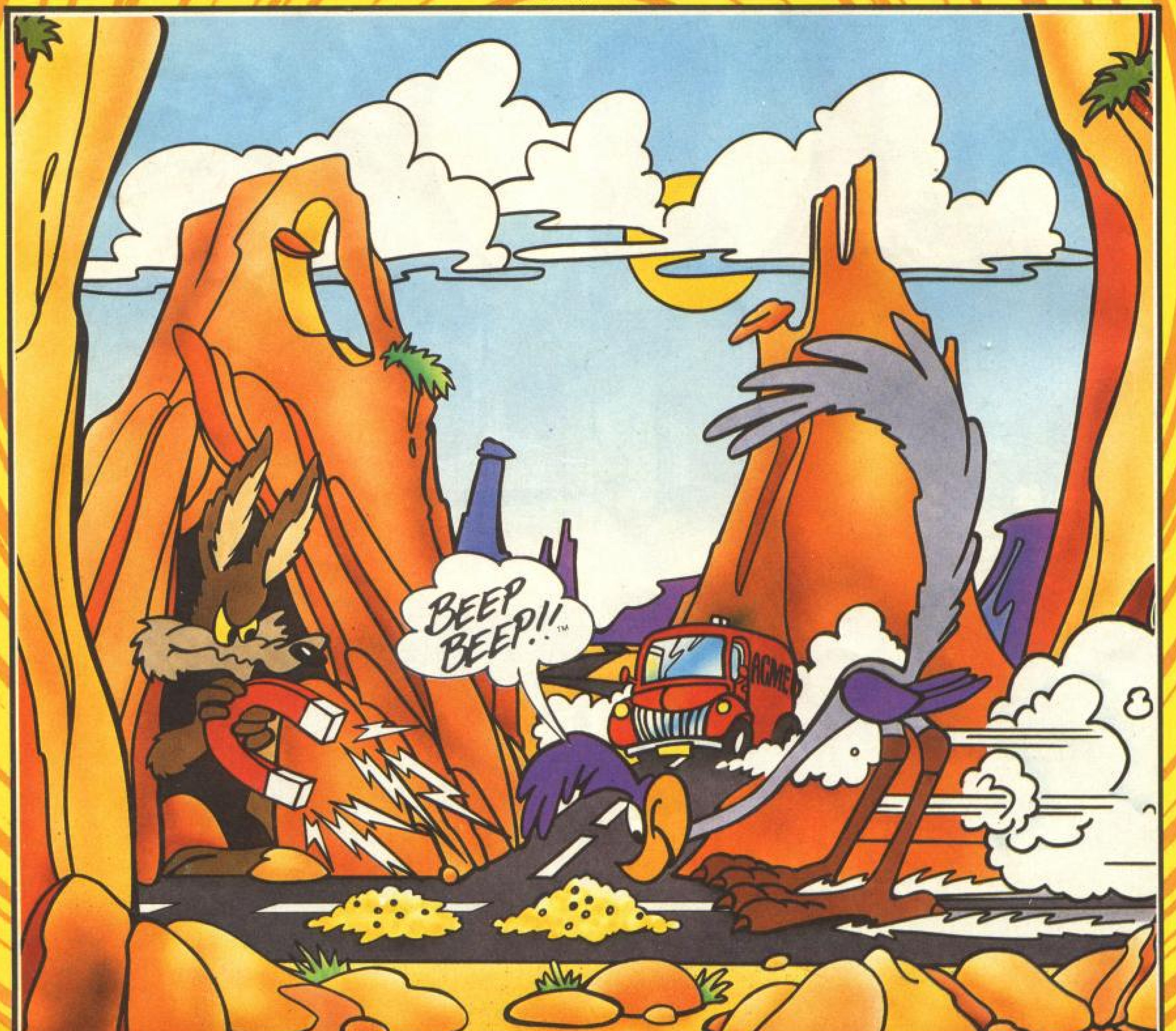




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SHADOW SKIMMER

The Edge, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

A routine inspection of the exterior of an interstellar liner goes disastrously wrong. The liner's computers malfunction and the ship's second officer is trapped outside in his personal scout craft – the Shadow Skimmer. To return to the safety of the main ship he needs to make his way to the main personal hatch, at the far end of the mothership. That means avoiding the ship's security and defence systems, systems which cannot be closed down by Galactic Command.



Having played and completed Shadow Skimmer **I can only say that the success of the Spectrum version must have been down to its technical merits, as there's nothing remotely spectacular about the gameplay. In fact, the quote on the back of the packaging only really boasts about the smooth scrolling.** Shadow Skimmer **is unbelievably dull. It's basically a tedious maze game with a bit of shooting thrown in for good measure. There are only four levels to negotiate, with no more than an uninspiring congratulatory message on completion. Technically accomplished and polished it may be, but this isn't enough to make a decent game.**

The hull of an interstellar liner is a complicated, and hostile environment. Radar controlled defences sweep the ship's face for intruding meteors and asteroids, aided by robot craft which roam across the ship's skin. These systems are non-selective, so the Shadow Skimmer stranded outside the mother craft is now treated as an intruder. Survival is only possible if the Shadow Skimmer can be piloted across each section of the ship's hull and its defences countered. No easy task, as each system is designed to be almost undetectable and virtually indestructible.



This has just fallen short of being a very good game, all it needed was a little more taxing gameplay, a rigorous playtesting and some neat in-game presentation and it could have made the grade. As it stands though, Shadow Skimmer **is just another moderately frustrating game with questionable lasting appeal. There are some outstanding features, including the neat way in which your craft glides around the playing area and the impressive sound – the title tune is excellent and the effects during play are more than adequate. The main problem is that for each point its favour there seems to be something against to balance it out – a pity really, as it came so close.**

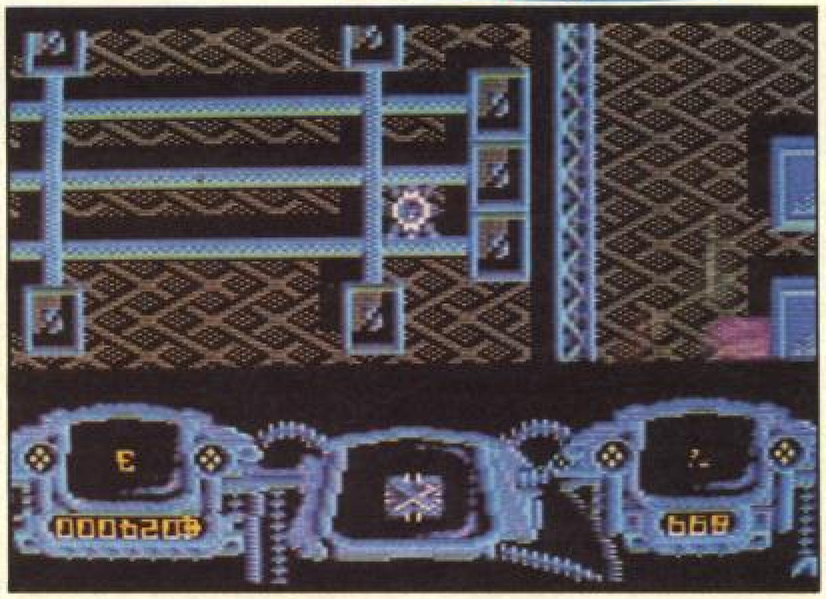
The Shadow Skimmer is flown left, right, up and down, and can even flip over and fly on its back in order to negotiate obstacles and barriers which would otherwise be too low. However when in this flying mode, it is more vulnerable to attack, and manoeuvres must be sharper and quicker.

The Skimmer isn't totally defenceless. Three energy shields help, but they're destroyed by repeated blasts from protecting robot craft or radar systems – when all three are gone, so is the game. Even if the Skimmer's shields are not breached, the craft is easily thrown out of control by blast impact, or on hitting a patrolling robot craft. A display indicates how many shields remain, with a Damage Report panel signalling how close you are to losing one.

Powerful pulse lasers are capable of destroying weapons systems found in the mothership's three hull sectors. In each sector, the defence system must be destroyed before progress is made to the next. This task is achieved by identifying crucial defence objectives and blasting them with a laser pulse. This done, previously impassable barriers no longer cause a problem, and the Skimmer can move on.

Forays under the outer skin of the hull are occasionally necessary. Here, the heart of the defence system is located and destroyed before returning to the 'surface'. Access is gained by hovering above a hatchway, opening fire, and moving through.

When the third sector of the mothership's hull is reached, the main personal hatch is found and through this entry made into the mothership . . . and safety.



▶ The Shadow Skimmer explores the surface of a Star Class Liner



Shadow Skimmer **looks and sounds really smart, and has obviously had a fair amount of attention lavished on it. The graphics create a great feeling of depth and the final effect is very polished. When it comes to playability, I'm not particularly keen on the precision needed to control your Skimmer, which tends to make things more difficult than necessary and is very frustrating. The action also tends to come in spurts, and usually results in your demise – which is a little disconcerting. Minor niggles noted,** Shadow Skimmer **is an otherwise good product, and should still provide a fair challenge for those prepared to stick at it.**

PRESENTATION 76%
A poor set of instructions detracts from an otherwise well presented product.

GRAPHICS 79%
Accomplished and smoothly scrolling, but could have been more varied.

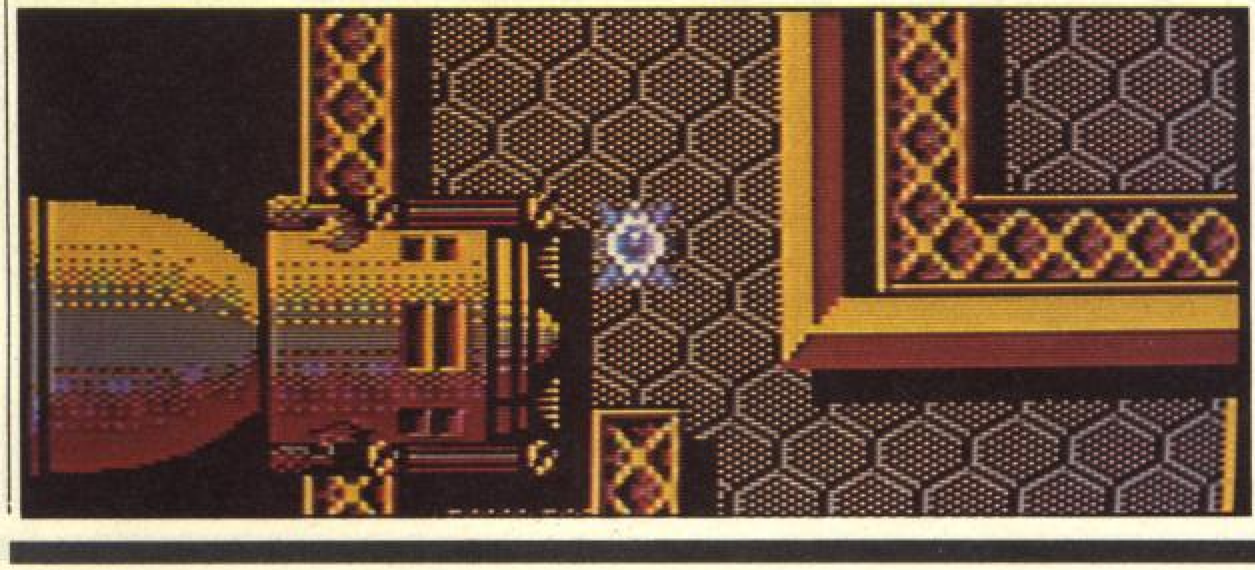
SOUND 73%
A pleasant title tune followed by adequate (if slightly irritating) spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 58%
Initially frustrating, with death occurring all too frequently during the opening stages.

LASTABILITY 41%
The four levels are completed relatively quickly, placing some doubt on its lasting appeal.

OVERALL 57%
A highly-polished and technically proficient product, sadly lacking in substantial gameplay.

▶ The nearby hatchway allows access to one of the ship's malfunctioning defence mechanisms



COLONY

Bulldog, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

In an age of extreme overpopulation, the World's Governments have begun a vast colonisation programme in an attempt to ease the drain on the Earth's resources.

Most colonies have taken shape on inhospitable planets, and the case in question is no exception. Here the colonists are mining the planet for iron ore, using robots to run the base's secondary functions – including the planting and harvesting of crops, ordering of supplies and repairing of perimeter fences. These are constantly under attack from the planet's indigenous alien species – beasts endowed with a voracious appetite who would dearly love to wrap their mandibles round the juicy mushroom crop.

Once inside they also gnaw away at anything in reach: seeds, crates, fences and even solar panels. If left unchecked, they could completely decimate the colonists food stock, therefore leaving them to starve.

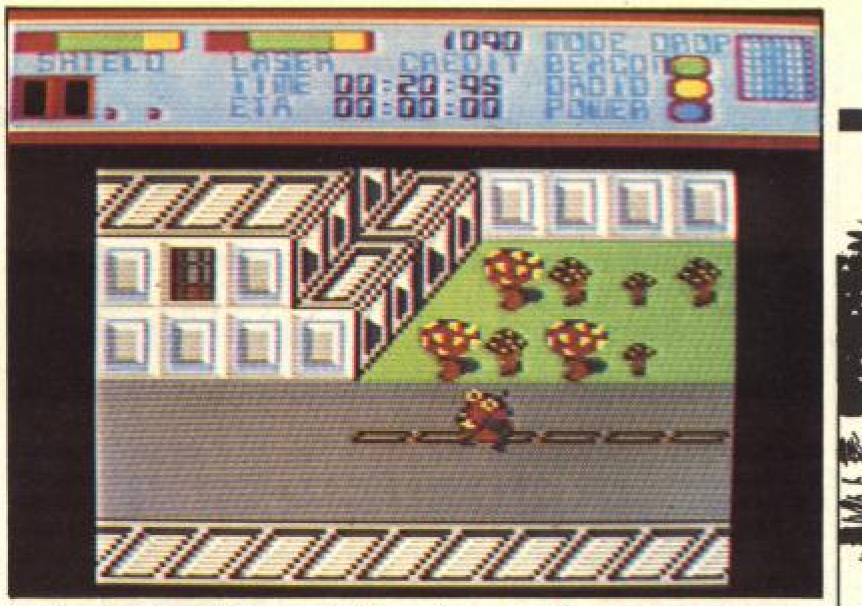
As a droid operator, the task of running the colony while the human occupants are busy at work has been placed in your capable hands. There are three main tasks which require your continuous attention: keeping the fences in good repair, ordering fresh supplies (seed and fence panels) and caring for the crops.

The colony is shown from an overhead viewpoint, with the radar allowing you to pinpoint your position within the enclosure. The droid has two modes of operation: one to move and fire at any invading creatures, and another which allows it to pick up and carry crops and fencing panels.

Fence panels are obtained from one of three buildings, corresponding to the different types of fencing available; wire mesh, wood and barbed wire. Up to four panels can be carried at one time, with fresh supplies ordered from a supply ship which appears at intervals.

The ETA of this ship is displayed throughout, and when the ship has landed (you must turn on the landing beacon prior to the ship's descent) fresh supplies are ordered and crates carried to the correct buildings and dismantled.

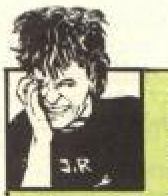
The colony's generator is a little temperamental and should be constantly monitored. Too much energy drain and items start to cut out – too little, and it overloads with dire consequences.



► The colony's maintenance droid proudly surveys his recent mushroom crop



Ever fancied running a colony on your own? Ever wanted all the hassle of having to order parts, fix fences, harvest crops, plant seeds *and* singlehandedly defeat an army of alien bugs? No, of course not. This isn't a challenge, it's a chore – and not a very rewarding one at that. The game has no obvious ending and it's about as enjoyable as doing someone else's housework. It looks awful, plays badly is about as much fun as going to the dentist – Urgh.



Colony **is a strange sort of game which involves a lot of fetching and carrying, the occasional shooting of defenceless aliens and remembering to switch on the right things at the right time. My first game went on for ages and I felt no feeling of panic, urgency or enjoyment at any stage. Later games led to boredom, and eventually I was glad to get away from the computer. I suppose if you want to do the equivalent of a long days menial work without leaving your seat then this is what you're waiting for.**

VIDEO MEANIES

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Working in an eccentric millionaire's video store can become a bit hectic at times. Especially when he just happens to set up shop in a castle full of meanies.

As his one and only maintenance robot, it's your task to wander around the building, turning all 15 videos on, ready for the day's customers. This is no easy job however, as certain room sections are locked, and the keys are scattered all over the castle – many of them in rooms which are themselves locked. Therefore you must scurry backwards and forwards between rooms, collecting the appropriate keys in order to enter the sections containing videos.

On contact with a video, a 'fruit-machine' style bonus screen appears, with the option to gamble for extra lives. Declining to play leaves the video activated and awards your robot with a bonus according to the amount of energy remaining. However, accepting the gamble initiates a moving bar which continually cycles down an alternating series of options. Depending on where you stop the bar, you either turn the video on and receive extra lives – or your robot dies and the video remains unactivated. The room must then be renegotiated with a replacement robot.



The guy that designed Video Meanies **must really hate us gamesters: it's infuriatingly difficult and maddeningly addictive at the same time. This means that you only stop playing when you have either completed the game or put your fist through the screen. It certainly provides a tough enough challenge, but is still the sort of game that you'll come back to time and again. After all, it's only two quid – and who wants to remain sane forever?**

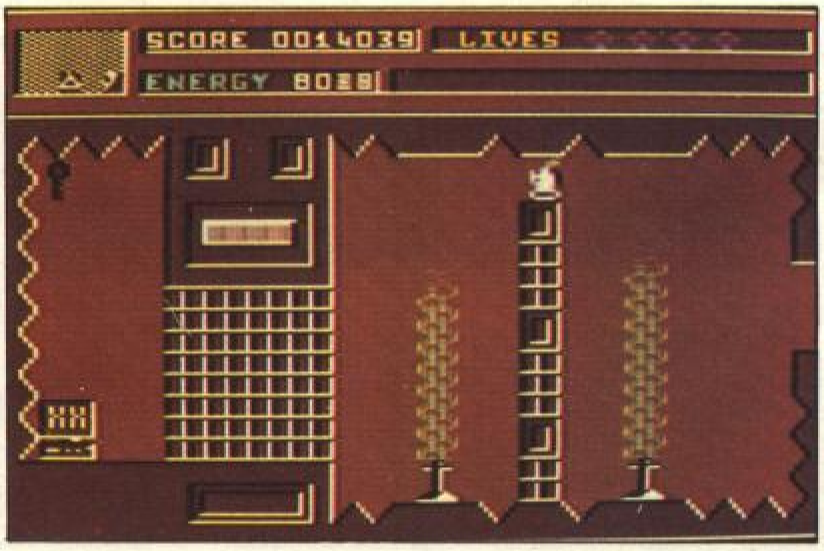


Despite looking and sounding awful, Video Meanies **is both fun to play and challenging. Initially I found it almost too frustrating, but once I started making headway the game became extremely enjoyable. The gameplay basically involves the player working out the correct route through the 'video shop', but doing so is strangely addictive – perhaps's because the scenario and graphics are so bizarre? Whatever the reason,** Video Meanies **is a neat game and well worth the two quid price tag.**



This is one of those games which looks very unimpressive, but offers plenty of fun. Some of the obstacles and traps are extremely difficult to negotiate, but the frustration level has been nicely judged and the game remains addictive, even after four successive deaths at the same, seemingly impassable hazard. At two quid it's a good buy – try it.

► A dormant video lies in wait, but how do you reach it?





PRESENTATION 48%
Adequate screen layout and general presentation.

GRAPHICS 31%
Bland and unimaginative sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 24%
The few forlorn spot effects fail to add atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 42%
Confusing at first, although the lack of threat to your droid means that even initial attempts can last for hours.

LASTABILITY 16%
The tedious action fails to entertain for more than a couple of goes.

OVERALL 22%
An original concept, but a very dull game.

Each room contains a variety of hazards, including meanies which rapidly re-generate when shot, and laser beams and sliding blocks which have to be avoided. Your robot's energy is constantly diminishing, so you are also under pressure to complete each screen as quickly as possible.

The game ends when your five lives have gone, and scores may be included in the high score table for posterity – or at least until you turn the machine off.

PRESENTATION 69%
There's an annoying between-game delay, but it's quite polished otherwise.

GRAPHICS 67%
A pleasing mish-mash of different styles and effects.

SOUND 62%
Catchy title tune and reasonable, though limited spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 55%
The initial difficulty may dampen the enthusiasm . . .

LASTABILITY 72%
. . . but if you persevere it will probably provide a good deal of entertainment.

OVERALL 71%
Another good release from Mastertronic.

AMAUROTE

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

The city of Amaurote has been overwhelmed by insects, and as the sole remaining officer of the Royal Army, the task of liberating it from this entomological onslaught has been delegated to you. Safe within your 'Arachnus 4' armoured vehicle, you enter each of the city's 25 sections in an attempt to despatch the occupying insects.

Taking an overhead viewpoint, the landscape scrolls past showing the buildings, roads and the objects of your attack, the insects themselves.

The Arachnus 4 comes complete with the latest bouncing bombs, which, when fired, continue travelling until they hit something. This means both insects and buildings – but the Government of Amaurote would prefer it if you left some of the city intact!

There are three types of insect to beware: the diligent but stupid worker drones; the scouts who fly around the city on the lookout for intruders, and the Queen – co-ordinator of her army and a one-female factory whose single aim is the continued production of her species.



The idea of insect invaders makes a change from the usual aliens, but an intruiging idea is hardly enough to ensure a good game. The vast majority of possibilities thrown up by this concept remain untouched, and the bland graphics and complete lack of action conspire to make Amaurote **very dull. The music is nice and atmospheric, but it would take more than a decent soundtrack to bring this into the realms of a reasonable budget purchase. Leave this well alone.**

Your main objective is to destroy the Queen, as she produces another drone for each one that you kill. Because of her vast size you need to use one of the new 'supa-bombs', which (similar to regular ammunition) are transported to you when requested. A new cache of bombs is dropped somewhere in the city and your on-board scanner indicates the direction in which they lie. The scanner is also used to pinpoint any remaining insects in the district.

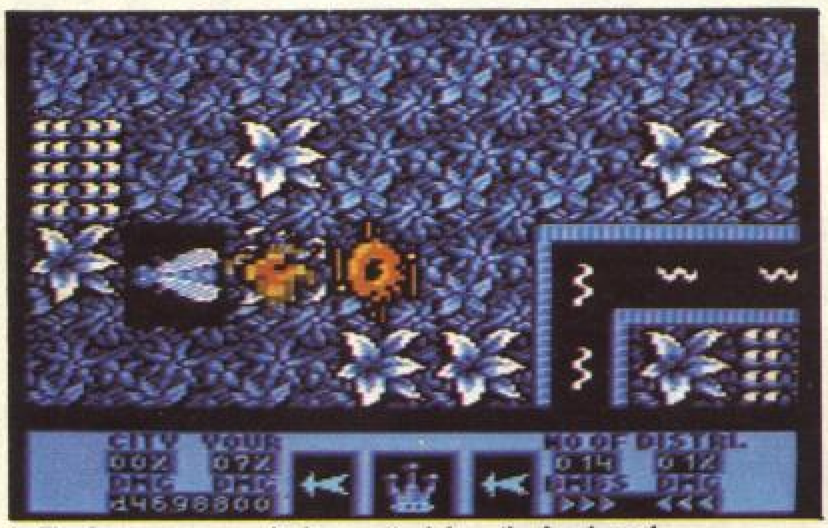
Only when the current district has been cleared of the six-legged interlopers can you then advance to the next section.



The standard of Mastertronic releases is becoming a little erratic: for every wonderful release we get, we also receive a turkey – and this is a prize one. Although smart looking, this game is far too simple and repetitive to attract anyone's attention, let alone actually hold it. Wandering around a desolate landscape in search of a final bug to swat isn't my idea of a good time, and that's exactly what you find yourself doing time and time again. There is a distinct lack of action, and what's there doesn't exactly set the pulse racing. Those in search of this month's budget bargains should cast their eyes elsewhere.

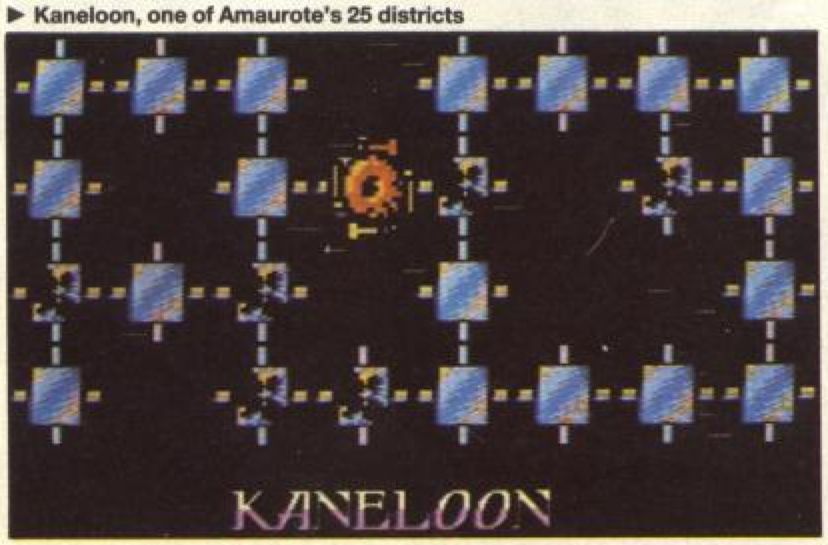


The flashy packaging, graphics and sound effects may lead you to believe that this is good, but don't be fooled. Beneath the glossy exterior is a bug-ridden core. The guidance system is pathetic and constantly pointed to non-existent insects outside the playing area. Sometimes the program even crashed! The basis for a good game is there, but the bugs serve to render it unplayable.



► The Queen comes under heavy attack from the Arachnus 4 armoured car

► Kaneloon, one of Amaurote's 25 districts



PRESENTATION 56%
Good instructions, options and on-screen information are spoiled by a bug-ridden program.

GRAPHICS 54%
Unusual . . . but nevertheless bland, plain and uninteresting.

SOUND 80%
An atmospheric soundtrack and good spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 65%
The simple control method allows easy starting on cold mornings.

LASTABILITY 29%
Boring gameplay and the bugged direction finder will dissuade most people from ever completing the game.

OVERALL 39%
A poor implementation of an unusual idea.

ZZAP! TEST

WONDER BOY

Activision, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick or keys

Just when Wonder Boy was going to pop the question to his fiancé, Tina, along came the evil King and his gang of minions and abducted her. This cheesed of Wonder Boy somewhat, and he vowed to rescue her and give the malignant monarch a good hiding into the bargain.

The gallant rescue bid takes place over four levels of horizontally scrolling landscape. Each of which must be completed within a set time limit – represented by a shrinking bar which diminishes to zero. If the bar disappears before Wonder Boy reaches the level's end, his quest is considered a failure. However, if the level is completed, the time remaining is converted to points, the clock is reset and Wonder Boy progresses to the next, more difficult level.

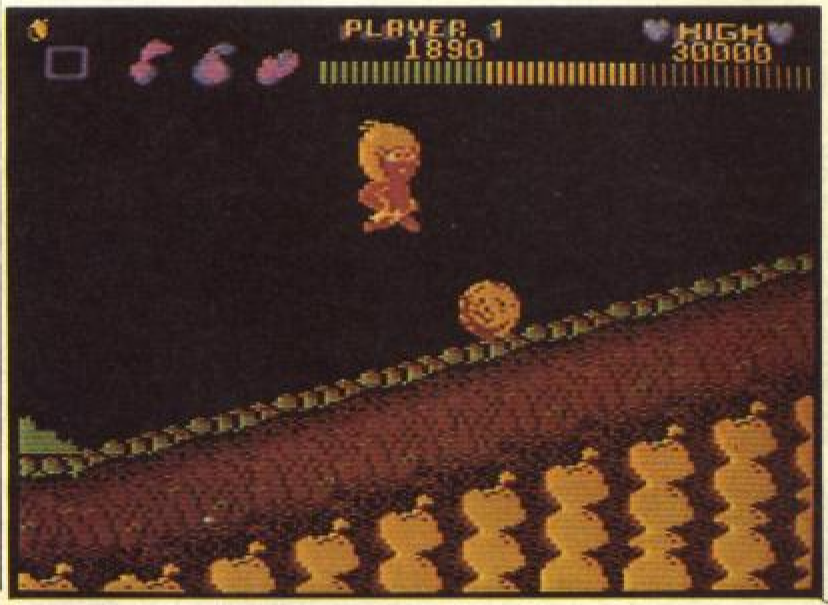
Throughout the quest ferocious animals are encountered, including killer snails, vicious bats and murderous frogs. These are all deadly to touch, but there is help at hand. Giant eggs can be smashed open along the way to reveal either an axe, skateboard, mushroom or a protecting fairy. Picking up the axe gives Wonder Boy firepower, the skateboard gives him extra speed, and the fairy protects him from all danger until it flies off seconds later.

Wonder Boy starts in the forest, then continues over the sea and finally through the King's icy palace. At the heart of the palace is the king, who's head has to be knocked off by repeatedly throwing axes. This done, Tina is deemed rescued and happiness can prevail.

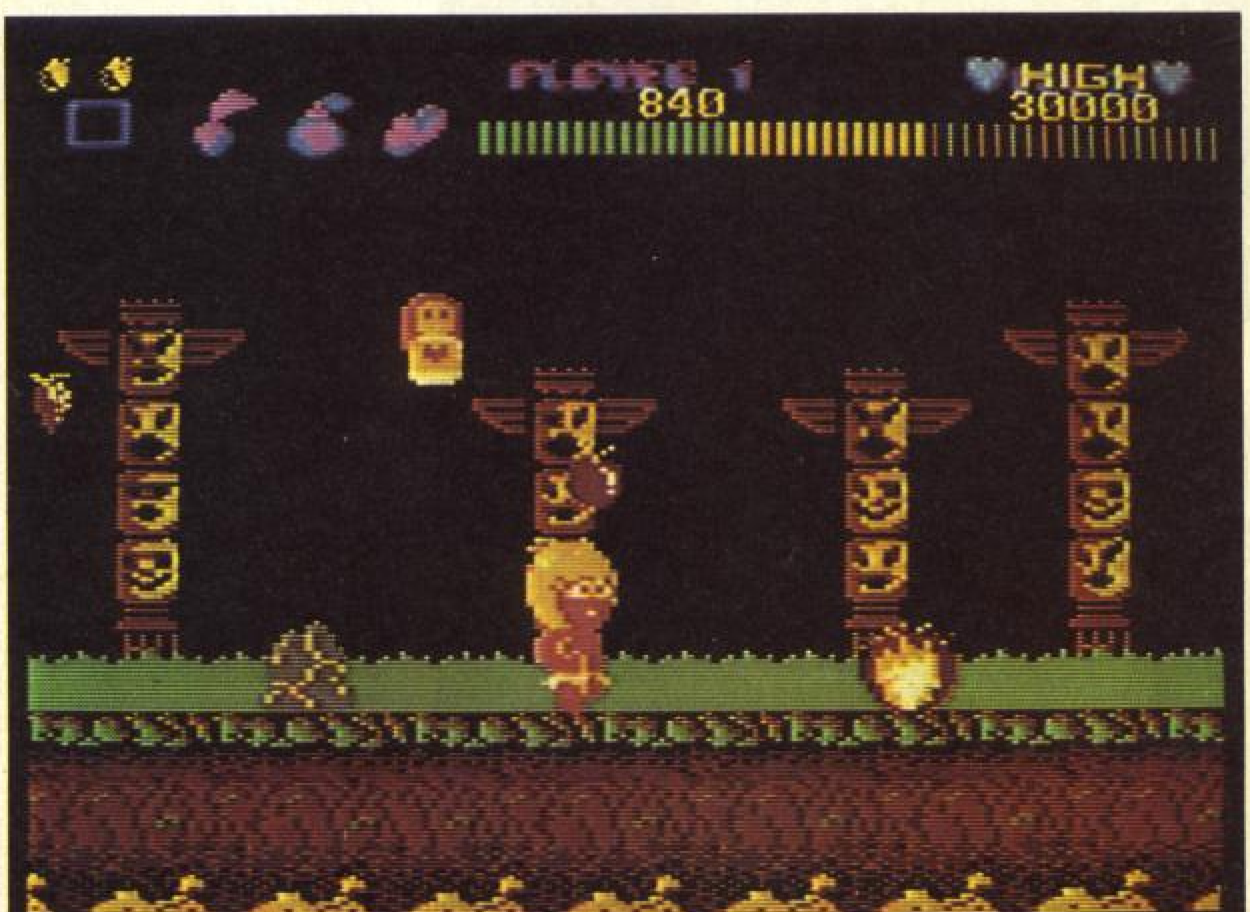


The main striking point of Activision's latest is the arcade type graphics – the characters are extremely well drawn and very realistically animated. The backdrops are great too, with plenty of colour and variety. I find Wonder Boy**'s straightforward gameplay very addictive and enjoy playing it very much. In fact, the only thing that annoys me is the infuriating soundtrack which plays throughout the game – it's absolutely awful. Overall, a satisfying arcade licence.**

► Wonderboy leaps to the sky in an attempt to avoid a rolling rock



► Our nappy-clad hero is having a few reservations about the Red Indian screen





The Activision stable is putting out some pretty lame products these days, and Wonder Boy **is certainly hobbling along in the wake of this trend. There's nothing really wrong with it, but for a full priced game it is definitely lacking in captivating gameplay or lasting appeal. An adequate conversion it may be, but at ten pounds I would expect a little more than the very average game on offer here. There was a budget game released a few months back by the odd title of** The Equalizer**. This was easily as playable as** Wonder Boy **and is only two quid. I leave you to make up your own minds to which offers the most value . . .**



I wasn't particularly thrilled when Activision announced that they were converting this to the Commodore, after all the arcade original isn't exactly brilliant. If you were stimulated by the prospect though, prepare for some disappointment. Wonder Boy **looks very similar to its arcade counterpart, but falls down completely when it comes to gameplay – it's far, far too easy. It takes about half an hour to go all way around the landscape, and once the King has been conquered it completely loses its appeal. At ten pounds** Wonder Boy **doesn't offer enough challenge or depth to be worth buying.**

PRESENTATION 67%
A one or two player option, but nothing else of note.

GRAPHICS 65%
Similar to the original, but still nothing special.

SOUND 23%
A dire tune plays throughout, and the spot effects are sparse and poor.

HOOKABILITY 68%
Running across the landscape is easy enough to get to grips with . . .

LASTABILITY 39%
. . . but it only takes a few goes to complete, and after that all appeal is lost.

OVERALL 52%
An unchallenging conversion of a very ordinary arcade game.

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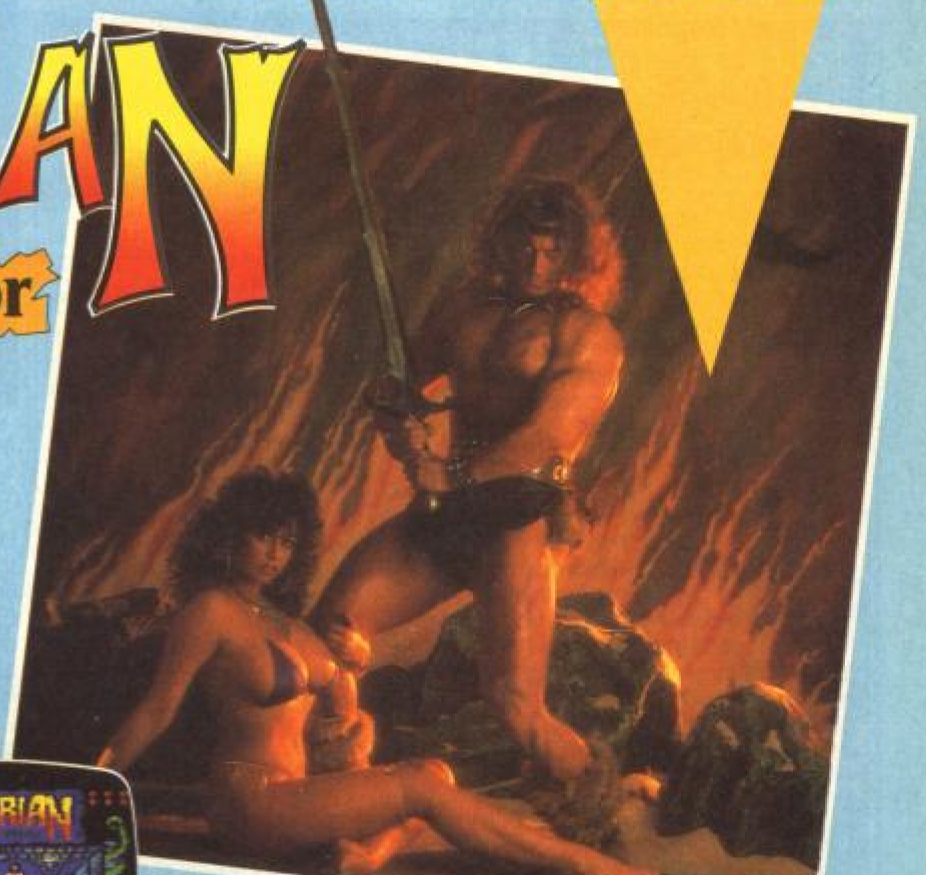
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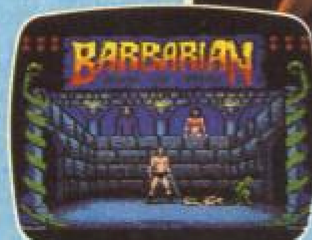
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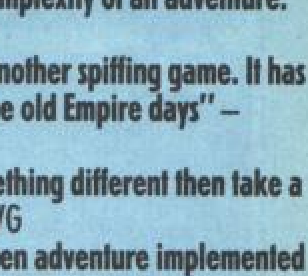
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ZZAP! TEST

KAT TRAP

Streetwise, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Back in June of 1986, ZZAP!'s sister magazine CRASH ran a 'design a game' competition. The lucky winner was Jonathan Eggleton, and his ideas were transferred from paper to the Spectrum by the Design Design programming team. The resulting game, *Kat Trap*, has now been converted to the Commodore 64.

The action takes place on 24th century Earth, abandoned by humans and recolonised by strange Kat Men. Trouble begins when the humans decide to return and the Kat Men refuse to leave the planet – the humans then have to evict them forcibly.



Even though Kat Trap **is incredibly frustrating, it's still pretty enjoyable to play. The scenario is pretty weird and getting to grips with the gameplay is quite tricky, but the action is rewarding and entertaining throughout. The graphics and sound are nothing special, but they relate to the action adequately. The biggest setback is that the game is a little too easy to solve, and therefore its lasting appeal is questionable. For this reason alone it can't be called a particularly good buy.**



The visual problems inherent in Kat Trap **are neatly complemented by the gameplay, which is similarly bland and uncaptivating. Roaming about a landscape shooting aliens isn't exactly the apex of '64 gaming these days, no matter how unusual or original the scenario might be.** Kat Trap **looks and plays like a budget game but comes with a hefty price tag, so I would think twice before considering it as my next purchase – if at all.**



► MT-ED faces the onslaught of two vicious lead-spitting katmen

Two war droids, MT-ED and Hercules 1, are sent down to do the dirty work, but as soon as they land Hercules is captured and MT-ED is left to fend for himself. As controller of MT-ED, the responsibility of the job has therefore fallen into your hands . . .

There are 14 flick-screen levels to complete, each inhabited by a different type of alien creature. These creatures are fatal to the touch, but are destroyed by MT-ED's laser. Opponents become immune to this on later levels, and MT-ED has to find and utilise the other weapons which are scattered about. These include rockets, grenades and water cannons, and are automatically added to MT-ED's armoury when



One word sums up this Streetwise game – frustrating! The gameplay is very simple in construction, but the slightest error can have disastrous consequences. The graphics are most disappointing – there's plenty of colour, but the sprites are difficult to distinguish. Kat Trap **is a very simple concept which has been adequately implemented, but overall I don't think that there's enough in it to justify the ten pound price tag.**

PLASMATRON

CRL, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Captain Ford is just another nameless face in the Empire's forces. Sent to reconnoitre the once-deserted Empire colony of Loughton II, his mission is to identify the hostile alien forces now ensconsed there. To make matters worse, Ford's exit point is far on the other side of the planet, with the aliens between him and it. His senior officer considers Ford to be expendable – Ford however has other ideas.

Taking the role of Captain Ford, you begin the mission strapped firmly into your space ship 'Plasmatron', taking off from the ruins of a city, with the barren and beaten landscape of Loughton II parallax scrolling from right to left.

A display panel at the bottom of the screen gives information regarding your ship's defences and the estimated time of arrival at the distant exit point, indicated by both bar-meters and digital counters.

Alien attack craft appear from the right, requiring either evasive or destructive action. The Plasmatron's defences are damaged by enemy fire, with structural damage occurring when the shields have been reduced to zero. An audible signal is issued warning of the craft's impending destruction, when the shield damage bar reaches the critical yellow and red stages.



After playing PLasmatron **for a while, the word 'average' springs readily to mind. It's as playable as most shoot 'em ups, but lacks any improvement over previous games of this type – therefore offering no real reason for its purchase. The graphics tend toward the gaudy side, although some of the later screens are quite pleasant – especially one which features an asteroid belt and requires some pretty fancy flying. The parallax is achieved well, but adds nothing to the game as you tend to concentrate on the action rather than the graphics.** Plasmatron **is no more than a competent but uninspiring derivative of a thousand other games.**

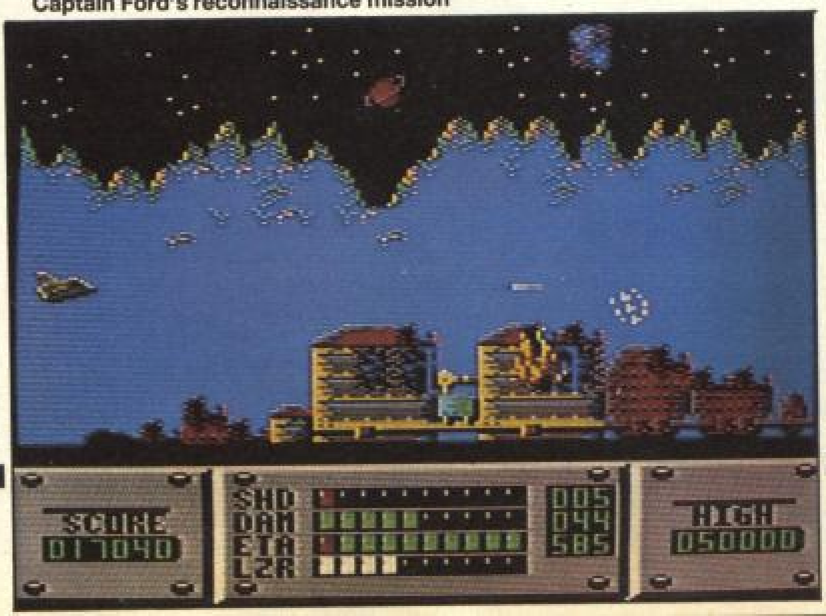


There are so many shoot 'em ups on the market nowadays that in order to make a mark, any new release has to be something really special. Plasmatron however is a shoot 'em up of the most basic kind, with ordinary graphics and a distinct lack of playability. In fact there's a feeling of deja-vu about the whole thing, as it contains nothing to set it a part from any number of other releases. Don't buy it unless you're one of the few computer owners left in the country who hasn't already got a whole range of games of this type.



I was pleasantly surprised by the whole look of Plasmatron. **Parallax scrolling is nothing new, but the creatures are fairly original and fire some attractive bolts and puffs of smoke. The concept is very simple, but it doesn't give any real incentive for the player to have another go. I found the ship to be very sensitive and the control very accurate, but the shoot 'em up idea has been fairly well covered on the Commodore, and consequently there's very little more that can be said about such a repetitive game.**

► The ravaged and barren surface of Loughton II is the arena for Captain Ford's reconnaissance mission



touched.

The 14th level contains the Kat Men's Nerve Centre, where Hercules 1 is being held captive. Rescuing him leads to a sub-game where the Kat Men's Central Computer is outwitted and shut down, and the Kat Men are forced to leave the Earth forever.

PRESENTATION 79%
Not outstanding, but user-friendly throughout.

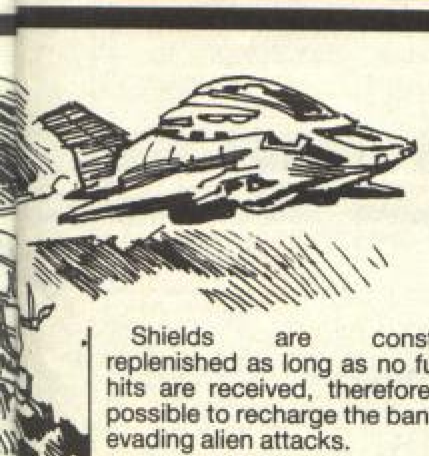
GRAPHICS 60%
Generally colourful, though the sprites are occasionally indistinct.

SOUND 62%
A reasonable soundtrack and pleasant spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 56%
The strange scenario and weird controls are slightly off-putting . . .

LASTABILITY 40%
. . . but once the control method is mastered it doesn't take long to complete the mission.

OVERALL 55%
An averagely original and enjoyable game which lacks lasting appeal.



Shields are constantly replenished as long as no further hits are received, therefore it is possible to recharge the banks by evading alien attacks.

PRESENTATION 45%
Superfluous launch sequence, and a lack of standard options.

GRAPHICS 68%
Colourful, if occasionally a little garish.

SOUND 39%
Poor rendition of 'Mars – Bringer of War' drones along with the title screen.

HOOKABILITY 73%
Easy to pick up and play, after all you've seen it all before.

LASTABILITY 52%
The unoriginal gameplay quickly becomes tiresome.

OVERALL 55%
A barely average attempt at a worn out format.

CHALLENGE OF THE
GOBOTS

Reaktor, £9.99 cass, £12.99 disk, joystick or keys

A strange one-sided construction, the planet Moebius, has appeared on the far side of Saturn. Unbeknown to the Earth authorities, this is in fact the home of Dr Braxis and his evil henchmen. It is from this sinister satellite that the evil doctor plans to launch an attack and finally defeat his enemies, the Gobots.

In an attempt to trap the Gobots, Dr Braxis has ordered his robotic henchmen to capture their human companions, Nick, AJ and Matt. Caught off-guard, the humans suddenly find themselves transported to Moebius accompanied only by Turbo, one of their Gobot friends.

Before becoming immobilised by Braxis' new anti-move ray, Turbo managed to plant a tiny transmitting beacon which alerted the remaining Gobots to their plight. Having received the signal, Leader-1 and his small sidekick, Scooter, immediately travelled to Moebius to free their comrades.

On arrival, Scooter underwent a strange transformation and began to produce clones. To defeat Dr Braxis, Leader-1 must destroy all the bases on Moebius and, short of ammunition, he decides to use the Scooter clones as bombs. Taking the role of Leader-1, you fly around the planet, picking up these clones and bombing the bases.

Alerted to the presence of the leader gobot, Dr Braxis orders his minions Gog, Cop-tur and Crusher into battle. These are blasted into oblivion by your Gobot's laser, or are destroyed by a well-aimed rock – collected by landing and pulling down on the joystick.

Successfully clearing a level allows access to the next, where Braxis' forces attack with renewed vigour.

Before embarking on your mission you have the opportunity to alter features such as the gravity and speed – effectively altering the difficulty level.

The package includes an electronic book which recounts the story prior to Leader-1's landing, and as a special 'limited edition' offer, the first games released will also include an audio tape containing a ten-minute soundtrack.



An 'electronic' book and audio tape are the sort of gimmicks which you'd expect to be included in a Gobots licensed game – after all, the original series was aimed at young children. What you don't expect to find is an unattractive and unplayable Sheep in Space clone. How is an average eight year old Gobots fan going to battle with this game's huge inertial forces and speedily moving aliens? The presentation is commendable, but the game is a complete load of rubbish – it doesn't even have anything to do with the telly series!



Considering the age group that Gobots is aimed at, the game is really hard to play – even when you've altered all the difficulty settings to make it easier. It's also a little repetitive, as there's no visual variation from level to level. The graphics are pretty and the electronic book is smart, but neither this nor the audio cassette makes up for the dire gameplay.



Challenge of the Gobots contains many options and numerous ways of altering the game design. The major missing component however, is a game which contains any interesting or addictive elements – and the playability is spoiled by a remarkably unfriendly control method. If the game was as good as the packaging and presentation then Ariolasoft would have a hot game on their hands . . . but it's not, and they don't!

PRESENTATION 93%
Plenty of options, including the ability to alter the game settings.

GRAPHICS 68%
Nice to look at, but severely lacking in variation.

SOUND 50%
Reasonable music let down by ineffective spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 36%
Difficult to control and fairly unrewarding to play.

LASTABILITY 38%
The similarity between levels soon quashes any desire to continue.

OVERALL 44%
Beautifully presented, but ultimately unplayable and unsuitable for its intended market.



OINK!

CRL, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only



The popular fortnightly comic based on the antics of editorial pigs and a cast of other odd characters has now spawned a computer game, fiendishly entitled *Oink!*.

Following in the trotter-prints of the editor Uncle Pigg, you have to prepare the comic's next edition by gathering page panels, thereby filling the porky publication's pages. Panels are obtained by playing three sub-games, with the scores from these contributing to the magazine's eventual completion.

The title 'page' displays the current state of proceedings, enabling the player to distribute newly acquired panels between the nine 'pages'. The panels include humorous snatches of dialogue from the comic's main characters which can be read as and when gained.

Three sub-games are accessed from the title page, with the program allowing you to leave one game, play another, then re-enter the first with the scoreline and position intact.

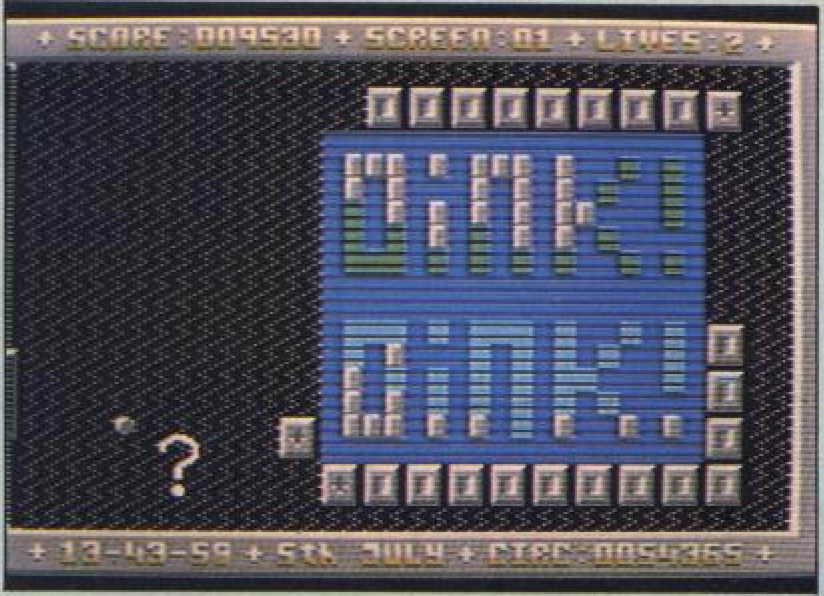
Pete's Pimple follows the path of the septic pustule as it bounces around 12 block-filled screens, *Breakout* style. Aliens appear from the side of the screen and are destroyed by using the bat's built-in blaster.

The second sub-game features **Rubbishman**, as you guide the inept superhero through six hazardous zones, set over 100 screens of tortuous territory. The caped crude-sader negotiates each section by shooting the blocks in his path, avoiding indestructible objects and flying over or under the low-lying hazards. At the end of each zone our hero has to run a gauntlet of flying garbage, avoiding or blasting it as necessary.

Last of the trio sees **Tom Thug** careering round an alien-infested maze in his Thugmobile. Tom has to find and gather bonus blocks – containing extra lives, scores or page panels, and keys which allow access to further maze sections.

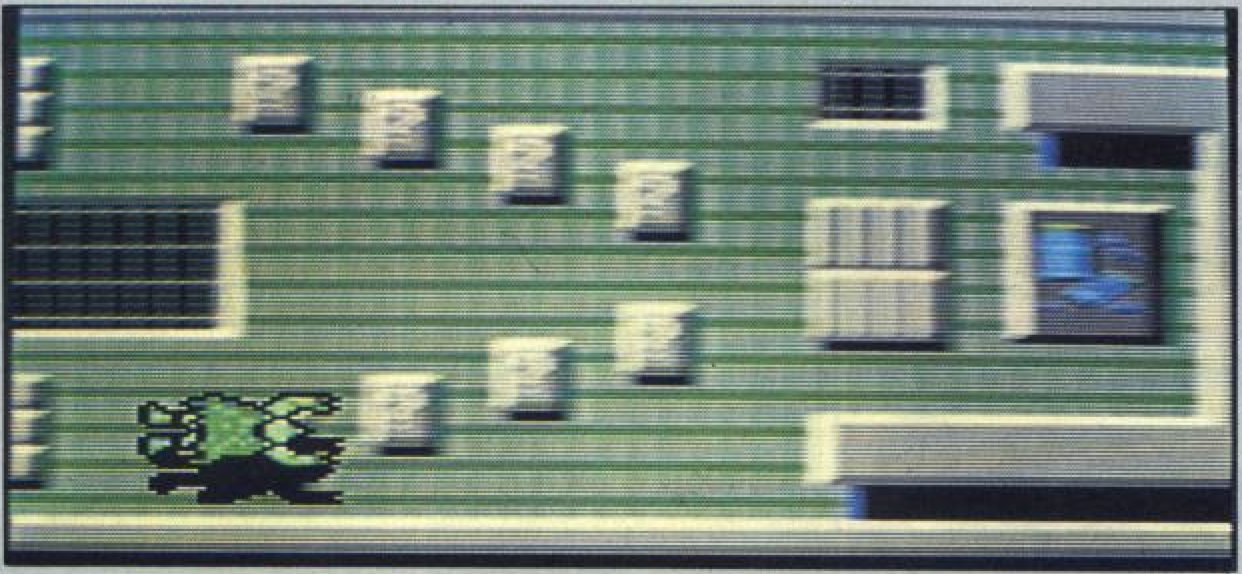
The hooligan's path is hindered by zombies and homing mines which constantly pursue the Thugmobile, these are momentarily stunned by a shot from Tom's blaster.

Further panels are awarded as the three game's scorelines are increased, with the game ending on completion of the final page before the copy date.



► Contact between Pete's Pimple and the spinning question mark reveals a hidden bonus'

► Rubbishman negotiates the rapidly scrolling corridor of garbage



► Safe within the Thugmobile, Tom beats a destructive path towards the valuable key





If there was an award given to the oddest tie-in of the year, Oink! **would be one of 1987's front runners. Tie-ins can be judged in one of two ways; either as a game in their own right or purely in relation to the original subject which the licence was derived from. Obviously, the best type would combine a good degree of both, but** Oink! **only really scores in the former. The link with the comic is extremely tenuous – Pete's pimple as a breakout ball and Tom Thug as an armoured zombie-chasing sphere are hardly the most inspired of character tie-ins, but both sub-games play quite well in their own right. The linking section which involves colouring in the pages is quite absorbing, but even here the comic's humour is not translated very well and comes across as quite dull. Not a bad buy, but once again we're presented with a tie-in which doesn't live up to expectations.**



Oink! was one of the strangest comics to appear last year, and the game looks like following the same path in the world of computer games. Just like the real running of a magazine, this requires total concentration over the last few days of production, and because of this the gameplay is particularly compulsive (if a little nerve shattering). The three sub-games are well presented, containing superb colour and some good bas-relief graphics. Oink! was programmed with the magazine always in mind, and this should put it on any Oink reader's shopping list.



This is another poor licensing effort, having almost no relevance to the eponymous comic – apart from the appearance of certain character's names. When viewed in it's own right, however, Oink! has a lot to boast about. The bas-relief artwork is some of the finest that I've seen, the use of colour is superb and the animation is also pretty good, giving the package a very polished feel. The sub-games play quite well, my personal favourite being 'Rubbishman' which is devious and annoyingly addictive. Not one for fans of the comic, but a worthy purchase nonetheless.

PRESENTATION 92%
Superb in most respects, marred slightly by fiddly control method on Tom Thug.

GRAPHICS 89%
Immaculate bas-relief work, although some of the sprites are a little unimaginitive.

SOUND 76%
The array of excellent spot effects make up for the lack of a soundtrack.

HOOKABILITY 75%
The three sub-games are instantly appealing and relatively easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 78%
Meeting the deadline provides a fair challenge, and the games are appealing enough to be picked up and played at any time.

OVERALL 84%
Possibly disappointing for fans of the comic, but still a piggin' good game.

MILK RACE

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Cycling fans need no introduction to Britain's prestigious Milk Race – the 1000 mile road race from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne to London. Mastertronic's 'officially licensed' simulation of this event gives you direct control over one of the 85 entrants as he pedals over 13 separate stages.

The race is run over a horizontally scrolling road, with your bike moving from side to side to avoid potholes, other riders and the marshall's car. Contact with any hazard topples the rider, and precious time is lost as he remounts.

The bike is equipped with 12 gears; with speed increasing as the higher gears are chosen. However these higher gears also decrease the cyclist's energy, represented as an on-screen bar which shrinks towards zero. Complete exhaustion means early retirement, but reserves are replenished by touching the milk bottles which regularly appear at the side of the road.

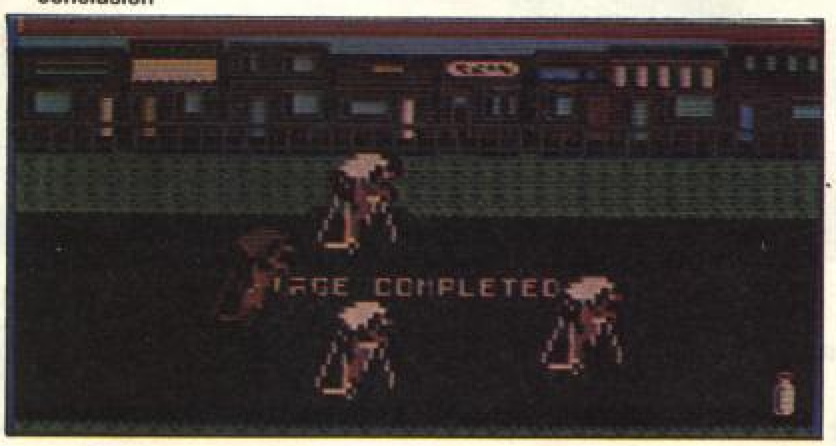
As well as the energy trouble, there's also the clock to worry about. On some of the time trial stages a timer ticks down. If the course isn't completed before the timer reaches zero, the race again comes to a premature end.

Points are awarded for the distance travelled along each stage, with a bonus received for its completion. The winner is the cyclist who takes the lowest time to complete the entire course.



First sight of the blocky cyclists and Legoland backdrops of Milk Race **does little to stir the imagination, but once the race has started, everything moves very smoothly and pretty quickly too. Unfortunately there are too many minus points to the game for it to be taken seriously: the collision detection is a law unto itself, and each course seems to last a randomly chosen length of time. The author didn't seem to have any grasp of gearing either, since you can be travelling uphill in 12th gear, and still manage 30 mph plus!**

▶ Time for a five minute breather as the second stage reaches its conclusion



▶ It looks very easy as a flashing line on a map, but just try cycling it!





This cycling race game is not at all impressive. It's true that there are one or two clever touches with make the game look nicer; the way the crowds heads turn to watch the bikers as they rush past for instance, but these don't actually add anything to the playability, which is desperately lacking. The thing that I found most frustrating was the way in which after having fallen off your bike, picked the grit from you flesh, and got back on again, there's a good chance that the marshall's car or one of the other bikers would knock you straight off again. Milk Race **is a poor tie-in, which is difficult to play and not at all addictive – give it a miss.**



Mastertronic take the race game back to basics and end up with Milk Race. **First impressions aren't favourable however – the badly animated riders, and childish marshall's car and backdrops are very off-putting indeed. Second impressions aren't particularly favourable either – the race isn't at all thrilling, and constantly being bashed from behind when the rider is just accelerating from the start is just plain annoying. The joystick control is poor, and the repetitive action bores after a couple of sessions. If you want a good cycling game track down a copy of Activision's** Tour De France **– it's ten times better than this.**

PRESENTATION 65%
Informative, but cluttered on-screen information.

GRAPHICS 42%
Smooth scrolling has been wasted on extremely poor sprites and backdrops.

SOUND 64%
A pleasant, but instantly forgettable tune plays throughout.

HOOKABILITY 42%
Easy to get into, but the action is only mildly interesting.

LASTABILITY 29%
It only takes a couple of sessions for the gameplay to bore.

OVERALL 34%
Fails to convey any of the excitement and tension of the actual event.

Mini Office II



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A003



Aaaaghghghghgh!!! The Wiz succumbs this month to the *Lurking Horror* – one of Infocom's latest releases, does battle on *Treasure Island*, is terrified by *Frankenstein*, gets stuck into *Temple Of Terror*, and . . . well, why bother tell you when it's all here in black, white, and gory crimson . . .

TREASURE ISLAND

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass

This is certainly one of the most ambitious budget adventures I've ever come across. It's got some very clever features, excellent graphics (even if they are a bit slow to draw) and a landscaping system like that used in *Lords Of Midnight*.

The game loads up with some pleasant music as the plot scrolls smoothly up the page. You then find yourself on the shore of Treasure Island, where you have arrived with Long John Silver to find a fortune before it's snaffled by rival pirate Tom Morgan.

The display consists of a large graphics window showing the landscape visible in the direction which you are facing. This direction is indicated by a compass icon situated at the bottom right, though you can only use this feature if you are carrying a compass in your inventory. As in *Lords Of Midnight*, you can look in eight directions, and the display updates accordingly.

Entering either WALK, RUN, or SEARCH then moves you 88, 350, or 22 yards respectively in the direction you are facing. Trees and other landscape features change according to scale as you move towards them. The effect isn't nearly as polished as, say, the famous *Lords Of Midnight*, but for £1.99 it's pretty impressive. My only other gripe is that it takes far too long to update the graphics.

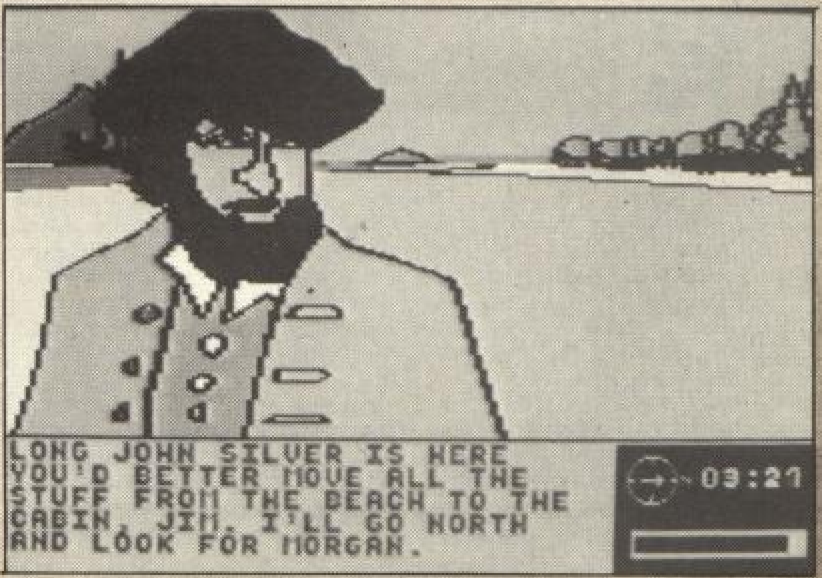
There's a reasonable vocabulary – not large, but sufficiently useful to make the game interesting. It includes some unusual commands, COOK, for example, and SLEEP (which speeds up the clock display and hastens the arrival of night, when the display is dramatically darkened). There's also TELESCOPE. This is an excellent feature which gives you a cursor on the screen. Move it left or right and then press SPACE, and lo and behold you get a magnified display of the area under the cursor in a circular window. Neat. Also occasionally useful, because the display gets rather indistinct in the distance and you can lose your bearings.

Other novel ideas include the provision of flags, which you can drop as you move around the island and which then give you a landmark to navigate from. This is essential if you haven't got the compass for some reason.

For £1.99 this is ripe for the pickings, Wizardlings. Lots of exploring, and if there's a slight dearth of action it's only because the map is so great that you couldn't really have a circus in every spot. It's very heartening to see a budget game using an original programming idea for an adventure rather than another *GAC* or *Quill* release – well done to the programmers Phase Two Software, whoever they may be.

Atmosphere	72%
Interaction	64%
Lasting Interest	75%
Overall	**84%**





TEMPLE OF TERROR

US Gold/Adventuresoft, £9.99 cass



As readers will know, Adventuresoft have taken quite a hammering in this column recently. I'm afraid their latest release isn't going to do much to endear them to the Wiz and his followers . . .

First, the good news. There are one or two useful features here – a BACK ONE MOVE facility (BOM) which enables you to resurrect yourself when killed, for example. We've also got QSAVE and QLOAD for fast restoring when in difficulty (or dead). There's even an 'extended text version' on one side of the tape which doesn't have graphics and gives the text-only fan a bit more beef.

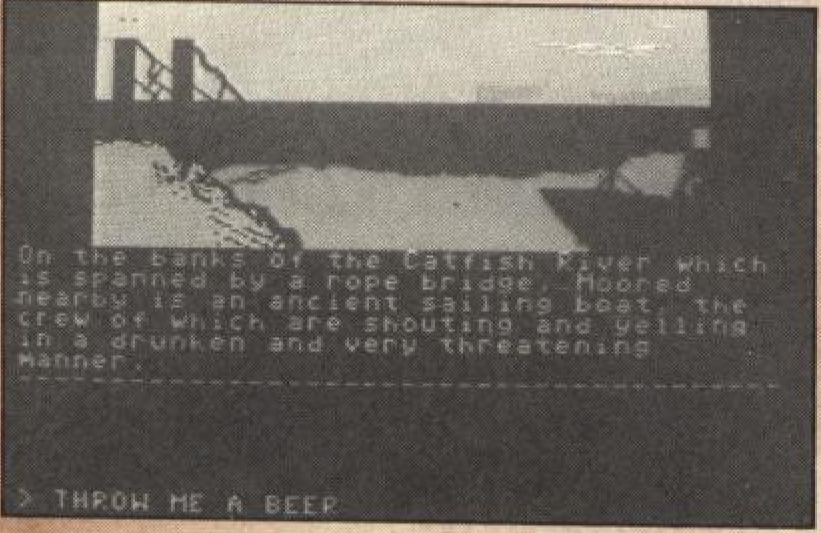
But the fact remains that these games are *still* behind every other release on the market in programming and design terms. I don't expect spelling mistakes in games costing £9.99 – even if there's only one (there may be others – I haven't finished the game at the time of writing). I don't expect a system so inflexible that it can't make grammatical sense, as in: 'Of particular interest is: a man's body, two dead Dark Elves.' It doesn't take much effort to check for plural objects and change the 'is' to 'are'.

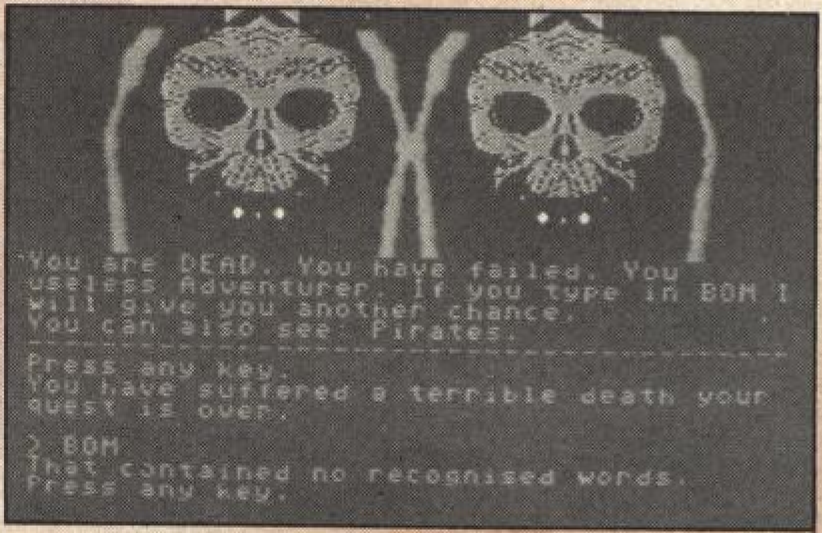
I also expect a little more in the way of vocabulary and flexibility in the parser. For example, take the location where you get the above message about the bodies – if you enter: 'Examine man's body' You're told that 'There's nothing of interest or significance about it' – silly, as the program's just said that it's of 'particular interest'! You get the same message if you type 'Examine body'. The problem is that the parser expects 'Examine man'. Ah well . . .

There are numerous other small points which annoy the player (or at least the Wiz), like double printing of location descriptions after actions, or having to enter things like GO EAGLE to climb onto an eagle's back.

A reader (see Mailbag) reckons that these games remind him of the old Scott Adams games. I have to admit that they show very little advance in design or content over, for example, *The Hulk* – or even some of the earlier titles like *Adventureland*. Come on boys, we're in the Infocom Age, not the Stone Age . . . There are better games like this being released using the *Quill* – and they don't cost £9.99!

Atmosphere	45%
Interaction	45%
Lasting Interest	50%
Overall	**35%**





LURKING HORROR

Infocom/Activision, £24.99 disk only

This is the latest creation of Mr Dave Lebling, co-creator of the original *Zork* trilogy and solely responsible thereafter for *Spellbreaker*, *Suspect*, and *Starcross*.

Well, *Spellbreaker* wasn't too bad, *Suspect* was brilliant, and *Zork* was . . . well, *Zork*! Despite the more recent appearance of the other titles, it's good ol' *Zork* that really comes to mind when you get down to playing *Lurking Horror*.

The game has been touted as a horror story – it's certainly got atmosphere oozing out of the circuit board and the Wiz actually jumped out of his skin when, listening intently to the 'chittering of rats' in the nearby darkness, the telephone rang in real life and almost induced a cardiac arrest.

Things start off easily enough. You have to finish your end-of-term paper at college and find yourself in the computer room in the company of 'a hacker', whose appalling body odour, abuse of normal speech patterns, and undisciplined code have to be EXAMINEd to be believed. After playing the college student role for a bit, fiddling with microwaves in the canteen, exploring the nearby buildings and labs, you soon find yourself drawn downwards – literally.

Perhaps you've discovered the innocuous looking trap-door in between two of the buildings, or the man-hole in the basement . . . Perhaps you may have stumbled across the – gulp – sacrificial altar, or even heard the . . . are they really rats, or are they . . . Aaaghghgh!

Of course, any sane student stays upstairs grappling with the problems of logging onto his PC, but not you – you've paid £24.99 for this software and blow me if you're not going down into the darkness before you can say fork-lift truck.

All of this is carried out in Infocom's usual meticulous style – and there's no doubt that Dave Lebling has a wonderful talent for bringing both locations and those that inhabit them to life – witness his description of the Hacker: 'The hacker sits comfortably on an office chair facing a terminal table, or perhaps it's just a pile of old listings as tall as a terminal table. He is typing madly, using just two fingers, but achieves speeds that typists using all ten fingers only dream of. He is apparently debugging a large assembly language program, as the screen of his terminal looks like a spray of completely random characters. The hacker is dressed in blue jeans, an old work shirt, and what might once have been running shoes. Hanging from his belt is an enormous ring of keys. He is in need of a bath.'

No doubt about it – you've got to get those keys. To do that, however, you'll have to find out what exactly turns the hacker on – not easy when his favourite rejoinder is 'Mumble. Frotz.' I can't help feeling that maybe Dave Lebling had a younger Dave Lebling in mind when he wrote this game – or perhaps one of his colleagues from MIT.

As it is, the world of end-of-term essays soon dies away when you slip down through the trap-door into the damp, dank recess below and find that: 'You can hear, in the distance, a chittering, scratching sound . . . '

Atmosphere	94%
Interaction	89%
Lasting Interest	91%
Overall	**90%**

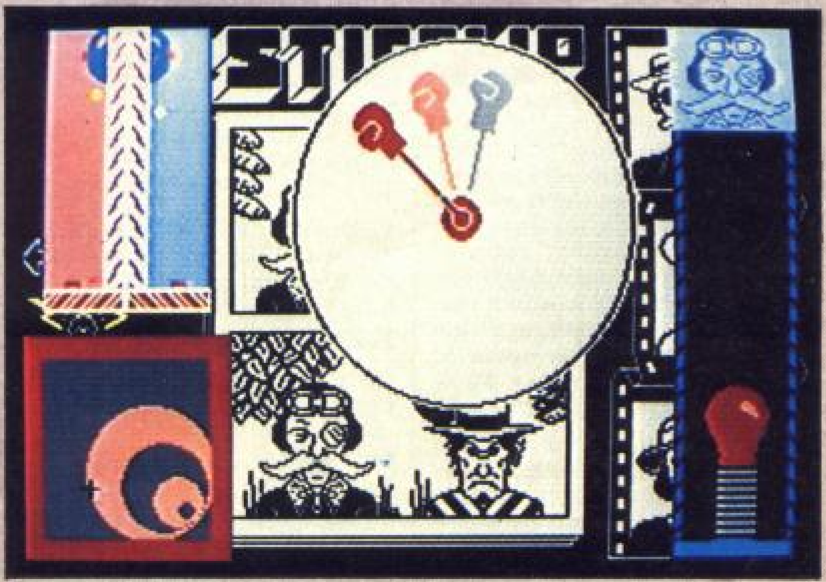
STIFFLIP AND CO

Palace Software, £9.99 cass, £12.99 disk

That contemptible bounder, Count Chameleon, master of disguise and enemy of the establishment, has developed the dastardly Rubbertronic Ray, in his latest attack on the moral fibre of the Empire. The ray drastically alters the characteristics of rubber and worst of all, causes cricket balls to behave in an uncontrollable way. The bounder must be stopped at all costs . . .

Cue Viscount Sebastian Stifflip and his cronies; Professor Braindeath, Colonel R G Bargie and Miss Palmyra Primbottom.

Armed only with a stiff upper lip, the fearless four set forth to the darkest corners of South America to deal with the Count.



Stifflip and Co comes courtesy of Palace Software, and has been programmed by the same team that brought you *Zoids* and the superb icon-driven game *The Fourth Protocol.*

Stifflip follows the trials of each member of the party individually, switching from one character to another as required, the new character appearing on screen in the lower of the two comic-strip like boxes.

All commands are again icon/menu driven and although convenient, the long lists of selections tend to be slightly confusing and laborious to use. There are six main icons, covering Movement, Conversation, Combat, Actions and Manipulation of Objects. This does in fact tend to limit the choice of action and some of the solutions to problems are hinted at by the commands available. A word of warning though . . . these should never be taken for granted.

Moving from one location to another results in a new suitably South American scene appearing in the lower of the two panels, and the previous scene is shunted to the top. The graphics are of a very high standard, helping to capture an atmosphere that could otherwise only be text created.

Defeating the Count involves solving a multitude of rather obscure puzzles, using the four characters in conjunction with one another. It also involves some arcade action in controlling the combat between our heroes and the filthy Peruvian wallahs.

Stifflip certainly doesn't proffer any clues to the final solution and more or less leaves the player to his own devices. This may appeal more to the seasoned adventurer; I found it to be quite a feat to solve some of the later puzzles.

The game comes in two parts, loaded separately from either side of the cassette. Completing the first releases a code which is then entered on request, allowing the second stage to be played.



▲ Colonel R G Bargie (GNT and bar) about to move West – as indicated by the window at the top of the screen. Meanwhile, Professor Braindeath and Miss Palmyra Primbottom are incapacitated . . .



▲ The Good Colonel keeps strange company . . .

The Wizard's Apprentice

Atmosphere	68%
Interaction	55%
Lasting Interest	72%
Value For Money	88%
Overall	**70%**

FRANKENSTEIN

CRL, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk

After the success of *Dracula*, complete with certificate from the British Board of Censors preventing sale to under 15s, CRL have decided to try the same trick with that other hero of the black and white horror movie, *Frankenstein*.

Rod Pike, who wrote *Dracula*, is a man with a liking for chunky descriptions, and this latest game also shows a considerable improvement in the quality of the puzzles. Some of them are really quite easy to solve, but remain logical nevertheless. What's more, the parser and vocabulary seem to work well together and cope with most sensible entries.

There are some gruesome sound effects, together with some even more gruesome digitised pictures of blood and guts, as you sally forth into the mountains to do away with Frankenstein. This monster of your own creation who has murdered your sister and gone on to terrorise the neighbourhood.



The Wiz reckons that this game is marginally overpriced – £7.95 would have been a little nearer the cutting edge – but as a three-parter with some tricky problems it's about par for the course.

Atmosphere	85%
Interaction	68%
Lasting Interest	70%
Overall	**75%**

WIZARD'S MAILBAG

I'M NOT COMPLAINING

Nick Carter, of Clever Contact fame, has just written in with a letter that should inspire other CCs:

'Since my name has been in Clever Contacts I have answered literally hunderes of queries on adventures, and have been able to help people from places as far away as Denmark and Germany. I've made some good friends and have had interesting chats. I haven't had the time to do much adventure, but I am not complaining, for I like being able to help people. When I think back on the games I played that caused me such frustration, until I finally cracked them, I would have so liked to have received help just a phone call away.'

On behalf of all those who've benefitted from your assistance, Nick, the Wiz wishes you hearty good thanks.

TRANS-SEXUAL, TRANS-SPATIAL, TRANS-TEMPORAL KIM

On the back of the adventure package, Silicon Dreams, by Level 9/Rainbird, it says 'Taking the role of Kim Kimberly and one of *his* dessantt' However your review (No 22, Feb, 1987, p44) you say 'In Snowball, Kim Kimberly awakes from suspended animation to find something wrong with the vast spaceship on which she is travelling.

What's going on here?? Is Kim Kimberly male or female? Or both?

Ross Gordon, Godalming.

That's no Kim, that's my inflatable, Ross. Seriously, though, The Wiz always firmly believed (inspired by none other than the original author of the game) that Kim was female. Accept no imitations.

TURNING THE KNIFE

I write regarding US Gold, Adventuresoft, and Scott Adams. I don't know if there is a current or previous connection between Scott Adams and Mike Woodroffe, but the games recently released by Mike are very similar to those of the adventure pioneer himself.



I remember (ah! reminiscences) many years ago with my VIC20, when I first played Scott's game Voodoo Castle. It had few locations, very limited vocabulary, and let's face it, it wasn't very good was it? Why this looking back: Well, the new games from Adventuresoft (some six or seven years later) have progressed little. They have beter vocabularies, and some graphics, but plot-wise they are lacking. Now I don't want to turn the knife in Mike – he has had a lot of stick recently – but I do go along with your views in the May issue.

Questor the Elf, E. Sussex.

Yes, Questor, there was a connection between Mike and Scott – Mike originally played an important part in getting Scott Adams' software into the UK. So however much I may agree with you about the quality of Adventuresoft's software (see review in this issue) it doesn't change my opinion of Mike Woodroffe personally, who has in the past done much to popularise adventures in this country.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Myself and a few frienmds have been working on GAC for the last few months and as the adventure is nearly complete we would be grateful if you would give us the answers to a few questions:

1. How do software companies mass-produce computers and diskettes, and how much does this cost?
2. How do you sell the finished product to shops?
3. If we sold the adventures for 10.00 per copy, how much would the author make (per copy).
4. How do you copyright your adventure? How much does this cost?
5. If we sold the adventure to a company – Melbourne House for example – how much profit could we expect to make?
6. Have you any tips that would help us?

J. Favell, Sheffield.

The Wiz replies:

1. *They use tape/disc duplicators that cost thousands of pounds. The cost per tape depends on the length of magnetic tape used in the cassette – as little as 20p per unit.*
2. *You go to the shop and try to persuade them to buy it. More probably, you pay a distributor (who does this all the time) to do it for you.*
3. *The shop sells the game for ten pounds, the distributor sells the game to the shop for between five and seven pounds, the software house sells the game to the distributor for between four and six pounds, and the author gets paid about 15% of what the software house receives. For a ten pound game, expect to receive something in the region of 75p per copy, for a budget game, expect about 12p.*
4. *You ensure that the following message appears in the source code and on-screen at runtime: COPYRIGHT 1987 (your name). You also lodge a copy of the program together with a hard-copy print-out of both the object code and the source code at your bank at the time of publication and receive a dated certificate of receipt to help you to defend future claims against your copyright by proving that you created the work at the time stated. The first two steps are free – or almost free – but in addition you will need legal advice if you take the copyright situation seriously – contact your local Citizen's Advice Bureau for further information.*
5. *See (3) for details of your possible revenue – your profit depends on how much it cost you to produce the game!*
6. *Contact Pat Winstanley of Adventure Contact, 13 Hollington Way, Wigan, WN3 6LS – she produces a magazine concerned with adventure programming, price £1.00 per issue.*

STICKING UP FOR DOWN UNDER . . .

Margot Stuckey writes from Australia:

'I just thought I'd tell you that since you published my name in your Clever Contacts column, to date I have had 37 letters (mostly from here in Australia)! I've done my best to answer them all. The Aussie writers were thrilled to see my name there as they get frustrated writing to England for help. I am most ashamed to admit that we have only one Aussie magazine here that devotes any space to adventures. Then it's only a column (literally quarter of a page)!'

Fellow adventurers of the UK, salute your Antipodean Associate! And remember that if you write to her for help, that it costs her a dollar to write back, so how about sending her an International Reply Paid coupon instead of a measly 18p stamp? You know it makes sense . . . Ask at your Post Office for details.

That's all for this month, fellow Wizardlings. Remember you can always write to me at ZZAP!, or contact me on BT Gold, 83:JNL251.

WIZARD TIPS

Act 1, Scene 9: With a hideous shriek, he disappeared into the jaws of the killer cockroach. His last words were – 'If only I'd checked out the Tippppsss . . . . ' (Cue crunching sound, followed by burp . . .)

Thanks for the following to: **James Blanshard, Mario Moeller, an anonymous Irish contributor, Edward Debuse, Frank the Menhir and Jason Jennings.**

KOBYASHI NARU

Shoot computer in corridor but don't go onto yellow ring more than once or you'll sink.

ZORK I

Say TEMPLE in temple, say ECHO in loud room.

THE PAWN

Metal key is in your pocket and wooden key is under the mat.

SEABASE DELTA

Once you've built the see-saw, type WALK PLANK and then type THROW BALL.

DALLAS QUEST

Heat the eggs at the spider's web.

ZZZZZ . . .

Push the bike to get it moving – don't try to 'get' it. Dig the sand with the spade, then lift bucket, dig again, go to igloo, ring bell (on bike), give bike, go into igloo . . .

VALKYRIE 17

To get diamond, use mirror to reflect lazers then shake/rock the pedestal, take the diamond and give it to the barman to complete the game.

When at bottom of stairs in Scholls Drakenfeld, shoot gun to kill the guard behind the door.

Get poison, empty it into fountain, take can, drink it, take ringpull, Insert this into telescope to turn telescope.

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD

Talk to Friar Tuck. To get a lift into Sherwood, go to the serf and get the horn and then enter the cart. Siward opens chests.

KENTILLA

In the room with metal doors, turn the dial to 16 and push the button to make you appear at the base of the waterfall.

ZORK II

Metal entraps and cannot be freed,
So tell a friend,
To do the deed . . .

SUPERGRAN

Kick football and score three goals to score a hat-trick, then get magician's hat. Then kick posts and use them to pole vault through Scunner Campbell's window.

In hospital, examine table, take bowl, eat porridge twice, get up, south.

To make more porridge, take the bowl, and wait for the milk float to appear then take float and get porridge from cupboard in your home. Mix porridge with milk.

BOGGIT

To escape dungeon, dif the sandy floor, smash trapdoor, take torch and examine it, then insert batteries in sword, throw rope at the window, keep doing. so until it grips, then pull rope to get out of the window.

LORDS OF TIME

To survive in the arena, pray in the temple for a pair of winged shoes – you must kneel first.

Clever Contacts

Hark! Dost thou hear that trumpet blowing in the distant East?? They are coming! The fabled band of warlords and warladies, the unparalleled paragons of problem-solving, the . . . gasp! . . . Clever Contacts!

These brave individuals are prepared to offer their advice to those adventurers less fortunate than themselves. For nothing more than the price of a stamp (or in some cases a phone call), you too could find relief from that nagging dwarf, that annoyingly invulnerable balrog or that teensy-weensy nuclear holocaust . . .

Please remember, however, that the Contacts are there to help out of the goodness of their hearts and are not to be abused. The Wiz has devised some simple rules of contact which you should always observe.

1. Do not write without enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope for the reply.
2. Do not telephone before 10.00am or after 10.00pm.
3. Do not ask for complete solutions to games – these people are here to help you, not to play the game for you.
4. If you're offering help, please remember that this column is not to be used for advertising or offering help in return for payment. There's nothing wrong with this, but please advertise elsewhere . . .

Stick to these guidelines and we'll all be happy.

Tass Times, Spiderman, Borrowed Time, Mindshadow, The Pawn, The Hulk, Xzzzz, Neverending Story, Hobbit, Adventure Land, Castle of Terror, Sherlock, Pirate Advnture, Hitchhikers, Wishbringer, Circus, Zork 1,2,3, Fourth Protocol, Price of Magic, Dracula, Ultima III, IV, Mugsy's Revenge, Sanction, Bored of the Rings, Boggit, Ship of Doom, Secret Mission, Hampstead, Mission Asteroid, Sea Stalker, Holy Grail, Ballyhoo, Spellbreaker, Gremlins, Red Moon, Worm In Paradise.
David Woodberry, Nutbourne, Lane End, Bembridge, Isle of Wight Tel: (0983) 872845

Voodoo Castle, Subsunk, Seabase Delta, Hobbit, Grand Larceny, Munroe Manor, Castle of Terror, Dallas Quest, Zork I, Murder on the Waterfront, Mindshadow, Neverending Story, Project 1: Mission Volcano, Ninja, Secret of Bastow Manor, Aztec Tomb Adventure, Castle of Mydor, Raka-Tua Adventure, Himalayan Adventure, Nuclear Wargamaes
Mario Moeller, 38 Greenvale Drive, Greenvale, VIC 3047, Australia.

Zork I, II, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, Dracula 1,2,3, Zzzz, Redhawk, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, Hobbit, Quest for the Holy Grail
The Microgen Cracking Crew (Attn Lee Anstey), Microgen 1st Floor, Kenham House, Wilder Street, Bristol

Hunchback 1,2, Labyrinth, Subsunk, Seabase Delta, Time Machine, Adventureland, Terrormolinos, Hulk, Spiderman, Nightmare Planet, Heroes of Karn, Jewels of Babylon
Mark Firman, 11 Denmark Drive, Sedbury, Chepstow, Gwent, NP0 7BD

The Boggit, Hobbit, Mindshadow, Hulk, Terrormolinos, Golden Baton
M Greenwell, 28 King Richards Hill, Earl Shilton, Leics, LE9 7EY Tel: Earl Shilton 46752.

Snowball, Return to Eden, Worm in Paradise
Ross Gordon, Balandra, Summerhouse Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1QB

The Pawn, The Hulk, Dungeon Adventure, Advnture Quest, Colossal Adventure (Level 9)
James Duffy, 23 The Hiron, Cheylesmore, Coventry, CV3 6HS

Hollywood Hijinx, Zork III, Infidel, Cutthroats, Starcross, Deadline, Ballyhoo, Wishbringer, Enchanter, Sorceror, Spellbreaker, Seastalker, Leather goddesses, Hitchhikers Guide, Zork I, The Pawn, Bards Tale, Phantasie, Ultima III,IV, Tass Times, Borrowed time, Mindshadow, Tracer Sanction, Pilgrim, Bugsy, Dracula, Very Big Cave Adventure (Pt1), Nine Princes in Amber, Wizard of Oz, Worm in Paradise, Return to Eden, Colossal Adventure, Gremlins, Dungeon Adventure, Red Moon, Heroes of Karn, Perseus And Andromeda, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, Hulk, Spiderman, Fantastic Four
Guy Thomas, 17 Borstal Hill, Whitstable, Kent CT5 4NA Tel: 0227 274846.

Vera Cruz, Red Moon, Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Emerald Isle, Worm In Paradise, Hulk, Hobbit, Upper Gumtree, Hacker, Grand Larceny, Merry Christmas from Melbourne House, Robin of Sherwood, Snow Queen, Kentilla, Gremlins, Terrormolinos, Lords of Time, Pirate Adventure, Sherlock, Bored of the Rings, Dracula, Boggit, Twin Kingdom Valley, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, Eureka, Colditz, Valkyrie 17
Jason Jennings, 102 Berkely Road, Shirley, Solihull, Birmingham, West Midlands, B900

Adventureland, Adenture Quest, Arrow of Death I & II, Ballyhoo, Blade of Blackpoole, Borrowed Time, Buckaroo Banzai, Castle of Terror, Circus, Colditz, Crystals of Carus, Cutthroats, Dallas Quest, Dungeon Adventure, Emerald Isle, Empire of Karn, Enchanter, Erik the Viking, Escape from Pulsar 7, Espionage Island, Eye of Bain, Feasibility Experiment, Forest at the Worlds End, Ghost Town, Golden Voyage, Gremlins, Gruds in Space, Hampstead, Heroes of Karn, Infidel, Invincible Island, Kayleth, Kentilla, Leather Goddesses, Lords of Time, Lucifers Realm, Magicians Ball, Magic Stone, Mask of the Sun, Mindshadow, Mission Asteroid, Moonmist, Mordon's Quest, Mystery Funhouse, Mystery of Munroe Manor, Ninja, Perseus and Andromeda, Pharaohs Tomb, Pirate Adventure, Planetfall, Pyramid of Doom, Rebel Planet, Red Moon, Return to Eden, Ring of Power, Robin of Sherwood, Savage Island I, Secret Mission, Ship of Doom, Sorceror, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, Souls of Darkon, Spellbreaker, Spiderman, Strange Odyssey, Tass Times, Ten Little Indians, The Count, Golden Baton, Hobbit, The Institute, Jewels of Babylon, The Journey, Never Ending Story, Pawn, Time Machine, Wizard and Princess, Quest of Merravid, Tower of Despair, Tracer Sanction, Twin Kingdom Valley, Ultima I, III & IV, Urban Upstart, Ulysses and the Golden Fleece, Valkyrie 17, Velnors Lair, Voodoo Castle, Warlords, Waxworks, Winter Wonderland, Wishbringer, Witches Cauldron, Wizard Akyrz, Wrath of Magra, Zork I, II & III, Zzzzz . . .
Nick Carter, Southampton Tel: (0703) 474777 2 pm to 10 pm ONLY

Heroes of Karn, Bored of the Rings, Gremlins, Voodoo Castle, Zim Zala Bim, Mugsys Revenge, Tropical Adventure, Dracula, Holy Grail, The Pawn, Return to Oz, Masters of the Universe, Robin of Sherwood, Fourth Protocol, Price of Magik
Christophe Brassart, 67 rue de l'Abbe Lemire, 59200 TOURCOING, France

Sherlock, Gremlins, Hulk, Spiderman, Fourth Protocol, Dallas Quest, Terrormolinos, Hobbit, Castle of Terror Parlapas Aris, 18 Pyrsinella Str 453 32, Ioannina, Greece Pawn, Tass Times, Borrowed Time, Tracer Sanction, Mindshadow, Starcross, Wishbringer, Seastalker, Ballyhoo, Enchanter, Sorceror, Spellbreaker, Leather Goddesses, Hitchhikers, Hulk, Spiderman, Fantastic Four, Gremlins, Red Moon, Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Worm in Paradise, Dungeon Adventure, Colossal Adventure, Return to Eden, Ultima III, Ultima IV, Nine Princes in Amber, Pilgrim, Perseus and Andromeda
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Tower of Despair, Dracula, Adventureland, Zim Zala Bim, Castle of Terror, Time Tunnel, Eureka
John Paterson, 8 Bracadale Road, Baillieston, Glasgow G69
Tel: 041 771 7729

Morden's Quest, Spiderman, Hacker
Nigel 'Nemesis' Richardson Tel: 01 360 8325

Pirate Adventure, Circus, Zzzz, Terrormolinos, Subsunk, The Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, Quest of Merravid, The Hobbit
Danny Dinneen, 12 Bishopscourt Way, Wilton, Cork, Republic of Ireland

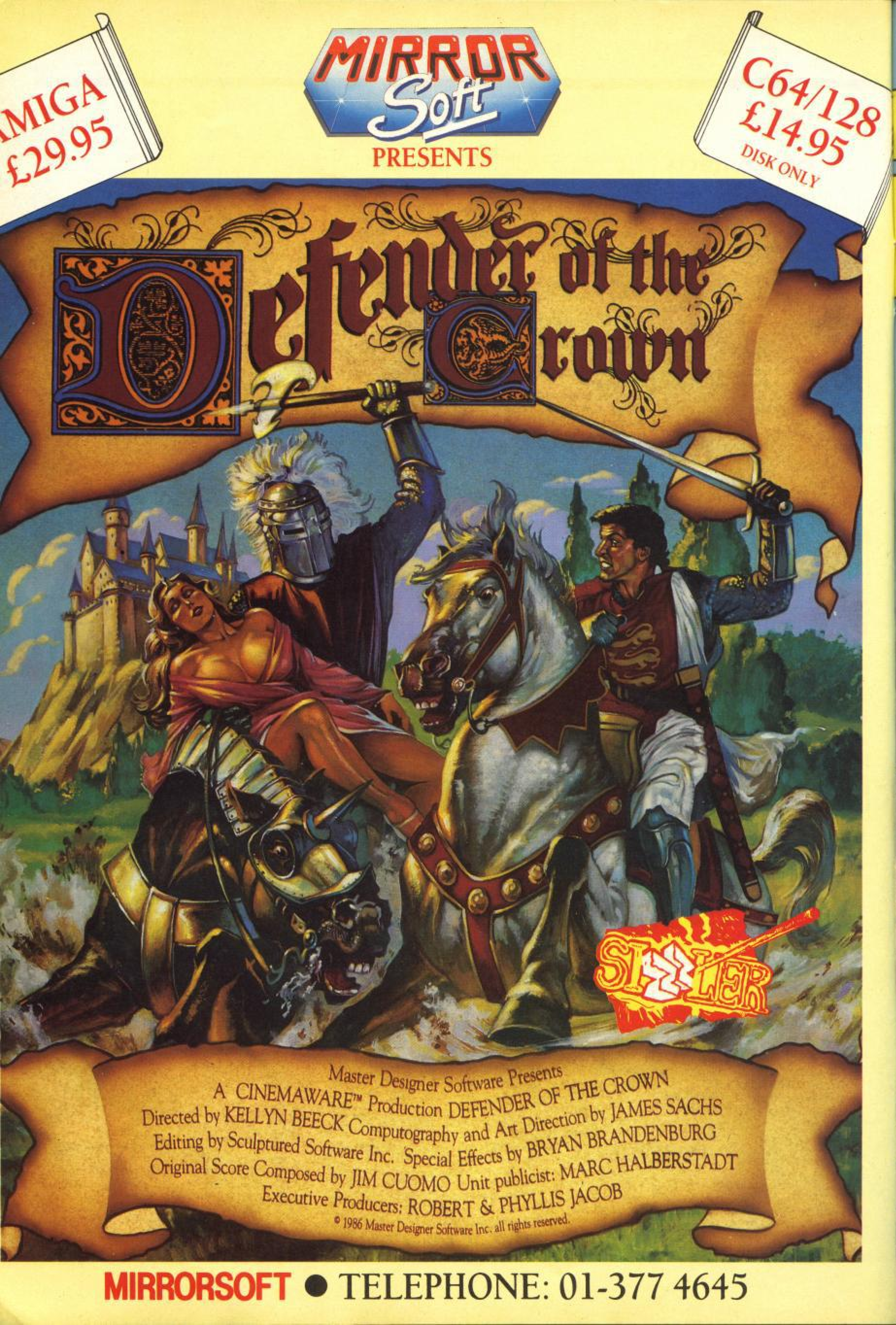
Red Moon, Emerald Isle, Worm in Paradise, Hulk, Hobbit, Upper Gumtree, Hacker, Grand Larceny, Merry Christmas from Melbourne House, Robin of Sherwood, Snowqueen, Kentilla, Gremlins, Eureka, Terrormolinos, Lords of Time, Pirate Adventure, Sherlock, Bored of the Rings
Jason Jennings, 102 Berkely Road, Shirley, Solihull, Birmingham, West Midlands B90 2HU

Ultima IV, Zork II, Suspended, Pirate Adventure, Voodoo Castle, Critical Mass, Wizard and the Princess, Mission Asteroid, Mummy's Curse, Mission Impossible, Robin of Sherwood, Masquerade
Derek Wong, 42 Ingram Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR4 8EB

Zork I, II, III, Adventureland, Dangermouse in BFC, Earthbound, The Helm, Marie Celeste, Temple of Terror, Valkyrie 17, Temple of Vran, Mask of the Sun, Lords of Time, Dallas Quest, Infidel, Mystery Munroe Manor, Gremlins, Supergran, Planetfall, Ulysses, Blade of Blackpoole, Seastalker, HitchHikers, Ultima III, Search for King Solomons Mines, Skull Island, Murder on the Waterfront, Suspended, Cutthroats, Sorcerer, Enchanter, Ninja, Stranded, Hulk, Mindshadow, Lord of the Rings, Starcross, Sub-Sunk, Worm in Paradise, Hampstead, Classic Adventure, Colossal Cave, Terrormolinos, Robin of Sherwood, Sherlock, Claymorgue Castle, Emerald Isle, Wizard of Akyrz, Return to Eden, Red Moon, Never-ending Story, Escape From Pulsar 7, Perseus and Andromeda, Golden Baton, Bored of the Rings, Empire of Karn, Ket 3, Feasibility Experiment, Lucifers Realm, Pilgrim, Secret Mission, Treasure Island, Wishbringer, Circus, Arrow of Death 1 & 2, Ten Little Indians, Ring of Power, Quest for Holy Grail, Kentilla . . . (More next issue!)
Margot Stuckey, 14 Marampo St, Marayong, NSW 2148, Australia

Voodoo Castle, Heroes of Karn, Pirate Adventure, Ten Little Indians, Hobbit, Lost City, Gremlins, Wizard of Akyrz, Quest for the Holy Grail, Zim Sala bim, Island Adventure, Castle Dracula
Paul Flanagan, 6 Corry, Belleek, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland Tel: 036565 594

Dungeon Adventure, Lord of the Rings, Quest for the Holy Grail, Hampstead, Lords of Time, Inca Curse, Espionage Island, Planet of Death
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AND BE SHAKEN (IF NOT STIRRED) BY . . .

20 ELECTRONIC JAMES BOND KEY-RINGS FOR THE LUCKY RUNNERS UP!

ZZAP! COMP

Bond's back in the fabulous new movie, The Living Daylights, and to coincide with this significant cinematic event, Domark are releasing a licensed computer game of the same name (see page 84). Programmed by American firm Sculptured Software of Salt Lake City, the game should be in the shops by mid-July.

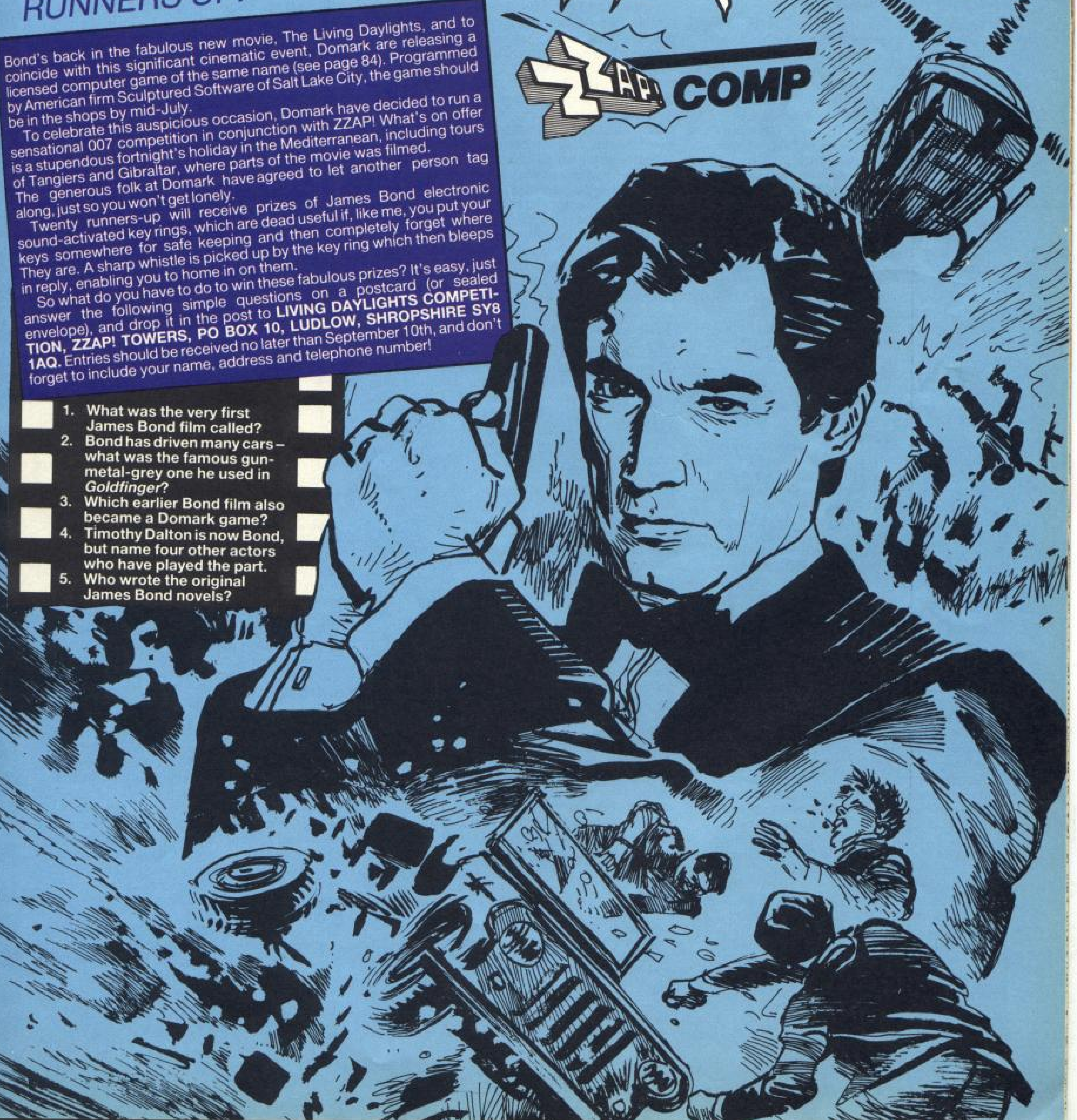
To celebrate this auspicious occasion, Domark have decided to run a sensational 007 competition in conjunction with ZZAP! What's on offer is a stupendous fortnight's holiday in the Mediterranean, including tours of Tangiers and Gibraltar, where parts of the movie was filmed.

The generous folk at Domark have agreed to let another person tag along, just so you won't get lonely.

Twenty runners-up will receive prizes of James Bond electronic sound-activated key rings, which are dead useful if, like me, you put your keys somewhere for safe keeping and then completely forget where They are. A sharp whistle is picked up by the key ring which then bleeps in reply, enabling you to home in on them.

So what do you have to do to win these fabulous prizes? It's easy, just answer the following simple questions on a postcard (or sealed envelope), and drop it in the post to **LIVING DAYLIGHTS COMPETITION, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1AQ.** Entries should be received no later than September 10th, and don't forget to include your name, address and telephone number!

1. **What was the very first James Bond film called?**
2. **Bond has driven many cars – what was the famous gun-metal-grey one he used in *Goldfinger*?**
3. **Which earlier Bond film also became a Domark game?**
4. **Timothy Dalton is now Bond, but name four other actors who have played the part.**
5. **Who wrote the original James Bond novels?**



MENTAL PROCREATION

By Andrew Braybrook

Thursday May 14th

Today saw the inclusion of another of Mr Penn's little suggestions, a second high score table. One will be for the all-time greatest scores which will be saved back to disk. This will be a facility only available to disk owners as it's too much hassle trying to talk to a tape deck, what with switching tapes half-way through and allowing the C64 operating system to talk to the screen, it means that I have to be careful not to mangle the system variables, which I always do! Disk I/0 is much simpler, just squirt a few bytes down the serial bus and let the 1541 stir itself into action. Sorry tape owners, but cassettes were never designed for computer use, tape decks are even dying out on mainframe systems now. Still, you won't miss what you never had!

Found a neater way of indicating which system or weapon to scrap by use of an orange and black pointer moving around the screen, sounds familiar, and it is. I know I said last month that I wouldn't resort to icons or pointers, well I fibbed. Just one teensy-weensy pointer is necessary, but definitely no icons, never. Anyway this pointer is a lot better than the old Epyx White hand which rears its ugly fingers in Star Raiders II.

Friday May 15th

Rearranged the game's memory considerably to remove the need for my secondary set of 48 stars. I'd duplicated the starfield characters for use in two sets, as I'm doing some screen splitting where stars could cross from one set to another. This would look very untidy if they suddenly changed to a completely different graphic. However I recently tuned up the raster split timing so finely that the split occurs off the right end of the screen at exactly the right lines where the set changes. This splitting appears to be stable, even when sprites cross the boundary, so the stars are redundant from one set.

Minor screen glitches usually appear on screen when the programmer can't be bothered to introduce a very short delay to the screen change routine to wait until the raster gets to the side border. Thus all display changes are carried out while the raster is off screen. Changes to the display mode or colours while the raster is on screen invariably cause white flickers and the infamous glitch (more so on C128s). Sprites can cause the screen interrupt to be delayed slightly, so if all eight sprites line up over a screen change the glitch can move by a few inches – one has to take this into account, says he, attempting to excuse the glitch in GDO, which he spent ages getting rid of in Gribbly's Special Day Out. Of course all of this doesn't excuse the 'mega canyon glitch' as made famous by Wizardry . . . remember that? Some games seem to be emulating this glitch even today, and I did tell The Edge how to get rid of it.

Anyway all these rearrangements of memory give me another 1K in the video bank, room for another 16 sprites.

Monday May 18th

Had a quick perusal through all the sprites that I've created so far and not used. There turned out to be 140 of them, only a few up to scratch. I drew a few more and came up with a design for the remote drone, a six-frame animated vehicle. I can display this in characters while it's on the launching pad, then run it as a sprite when it's in-flight. This gets me out of wasting four sprites all the time, as the ship could be configured with four landing pads with remotes on.

I want to set up a series of charge orbitals in a pattern in the play arena. I was using the star explosion routine with predetermined start speeds to initially show their positions on a smaller scale. This didn't work too well, as some parts flew off screen at breakneck speed while others moved very slowly. Tomorrow I'll try another method. All I want to do is display a pattern rather like electron shells around the nucleus. The positions generated by this sequence will decide the positions of the charge orbitals in the game proper. I will be using sound to indicate proximity to the centre of the pattern.

Thursday May 19th

The patterned charge centre didn't work out. There were too many concentric rings with too few parts in each so it looked like a mass of dots (even though they were in a pattern). I decided to use the existing title screen explosion generator to produce the charge orbitals, which it does admirably. They could appear in one or two rings, a spiral or randomly distributed. I had to slow down the particles to get them to stay near the screen centre. I also fixed the bug in the position calculation routine so that the particles are moving at a fourth parallax speed in space. I've worked out that there will only ever be one of 32 orbitting particles or the nucleus on screen at any one time, so I need only assign one sprite to this function. This led me to define the remaining objects. Eight are for the ship's bullets, one for the remote, one for the orbitals, two for charge rejuvenators, two for charge supervisors, three for meanies' bullets, two for roamers, and five for other assorted bad guys. This keeps the top limit to 24, although I don't expect all of these to be on screen at once. My top limit of 32 is safe, and keeping the limit of 24 should safeguard the NTSC version which requires that CPU usage be kept down.

Roamers will be antagonisers, just wanderers that keep annoying the player in otherwise non-busy moments. Charge rejuvenators will carry charge from the nucleus to the steadily decaying orbitals – because of this decay, the rejuvenators will have to visit all orbitals periodically. The charge supervisors will shuttle around the orbitals ensuring that all is well.

Wednesday May 20th

Put in some of the coding to run the remote drone vehicle. This will sit on the landing pad until activated, and then buzz round the screen with its own gun mounted on top. Control of the main ship will temporarily be lost while flying the remote. I anticipate being able to leave the remote out in space near the ship as a decoy if required. I also think that it will become permanently lost if it strays too far from the ship. I would also like different drones to have different handling capabilities.

During launch the remote has to switch from being characters to a sprite so that multiple remotes can be carried without using too many sprites. Only one remote will be operable at a time, naturally, as one only has one joystick.

Thursday May 21st

Spent the day at the Institute of Directors discussing the ways of the World with Andrew Hewson.

Friday May 22nd

Worked out yesterday that the playing area of Morpheus is in fact 256 by 256 screens, per level, some 65,000 screens big. This is probably why it is quite difficult to locate the orbitals, as even moving at more than one screen per second it would take over eleven hours to explore it all! This is quite impractical, so I decided to shrink the Universe to a more manageable 64 by 64 screens, such power! This would still take about an hour to cover, but I'll be providing sonics to guide one into the centre, it's only fair.

Tuesday May 26th

Put in the remote vehicle movement algorithm but wasn't happy with it, so I took it out again. It just felt wrong as the movement seemed to always be in straight horizontal or vertical lines, this game definitely has a more 'circular' feel to it.

The remote drone is a peculiar beast, a sort of central vertical fuselage with a hole through the middle, the purpose of which will become clear later. It then has four protrusions, two at the top and two at the bottom, each supporting a rotating triangular block, viewed end-on to allow me to show off varying grey shades as the light falls upon the surfaces. The mysterious hole through the centre is for aiding landing of the remote by being able to see the flashing centre of the landing pad through it. Thus it is possible to line up accurately, knowing that it will land if the entire hole is flashing!

Wednesday May 27th

Changed the remote to run on a polar vector system which allows it to fly in circles if required – I'm not quite sure what to do with it if it's allowed to fly miles away from the ship! I also have to cater for all combinations of ship, I'm only allowing one active remote at once, but the ship could have up to four landing pads with remotes on. I have to prevent the take-off of a second remote, but allow it if the first is later destroyed in action. I shall have to enforce the restriction that a remote must land on its own pad, not another, due to the way the remote's firing characteristics are picked up. I know it would be nice to drive one's X-19 into next door's Porsche garage and get a Porsche 944 out the next morning but life's not like that, anyway, I've tried it and it doesn't work!

Tuesday May 28th

The remote movement system was completed by

allowing the ship to leave it in any place and fly away, the remote will keep going at the speed it was left at. It's best to leave it stationary if you want to find it again, and this enables the player to sacrifice it as a decoy. The movement turned out to be a bit tricky to tune up, so there aren't too many possibilities for good control, so I'll stick to the one set of parameters for all remotes, but still give them different weapons.

The co-ordinate system used for this is really confusing as there are two centres, one near the ship at the top left of the screen, and the other wherever the charge nucleus is. It's like drawing two pictures on two bits of tracing paper and sliding them over each other, with the additional complication that one set of co-ordinates can 'wrap around'. I just have to remember which set of positions any one object is running against.

Friday May 29th

I'm rounding off the ship improvement system by putting in the bits where you have to get involved in financial matters. Yes, I have a new routine called 'taxman', the bit where you have to pay for things. This requires setting up some prices and co-ordinating the score displays for two players. All scores accumulated in the current phase are added into the funds for buying new parts. I also have to display the current funds on the screen during the buying phase, so I persuaded the score update routine to do that for me. It didn't seem to mind too much, I just pulled the wool over its eyes and it was none the wiser.

I need a monetary unit for all this. I reckon that Intergalactic credits have been used enough, so I may well stick to good old Alleykat Guineas. They have a certain air of quality about them, like Florins, Furlongs and British Thermal Units.

Monday June 1st

Since the ship is run on energy it seems logical that the 'end of game' condition is when you run out of the stuff. Then what happens? Well normally the ship might blow up. I've never quite understood why electrical equipment has stacks of gelignite bolted into it so that the slightest fault can cause a firework display. I expect it was thought of by the same person that decided that bombing fuel dumps in scramble miraculously fills your tanks with rocket fodder. That's the excuse, now the problem. There's no practical way of blowing up a enormous ship on the screen. It was suggested by a Welsh correspondent that the ship should glow red, white out, when fade away into billions of pieces as executed so spectacularly by the Earth in the Hitch-Hiker's Guide. Well, take away the billions of pieces and that's what I've done.

Iv'e also designed a game logo on Deluxe Paint last night which may or may not be used in the official artwork. It's a full screen of logo so I can't really do it in the C64, although I may experiment with it for the tape loader.

Tuesday June 2nd

Finished off the graphics for the onboard systems and worked out how to run them all. It's all very well having a system selection utility, but it's better if the systems actually do something. I've got to take into account that some units can be fitted in more than one position to double up the effect, shields and solar cells immediately spring to mind.

Wednesday June 3rd

I have some system graphics that I don't know exactly what to do with yet, but I've put in some systems such as solar cells, battery units for energy storage, shield generators and replenishers, energy to charge convertors, charge to energy convertors, remote locators, orbital proximity detectors and . . . it even makes tea!

Some orbitals are leaving the Universe and I'm not sure what to do about them, I've randomly repositioned them at present which was fairly stupid because I now don't know the polar vector to get to it.

Thursday June 4th

Spent the day at Hewson's (does this imply that you did no work? – Ed).

Friday June 5th

Yesterday I half-inched some of John Cumming's sprites that probably won't get into Zynaps, which is a pity because they're really good. I had a good sift through them and as an experiment I changed all their colours to my three grey shades, and horrors of horrors, they all just died. This is why I've been having so much trouble designing sprites, my 'save a few cycles' method has finally caught up with me. Using the three greys doesn't offer enough contrast. I'll still use two greys but allow the third colour to be anything. I then proceeded to prove the point by designing an animated sequence of 22 sprites for the charge rejuvenator with no ensuing problems. Why has it taken me so long to discover this? Answers on a postcard to (cont page 202)

My onboard energy systems don't seem to be working some of the time – oh goody, an intermittent bug, my favourite!

Monday June 8th

A nice up to date listing has appeared on my desk courtesy of the ST Printing Co. This is good for spotting all the howlers. First off, the Universe will be variable in size, AB has decreed it. It will expand as the game goes on to increase the difficulty level. Any particle leaving this Universe will be caught and shot (or marked up as dead anyway).

The intermittent system bug was caused by the last system on the ship not being processed, hence the sequence in which the systems were installed was causing the systems to fail in different ways. Any one system would work on its own, but they wouldn't all work together.

I've added some more systems and weapons to the development sequence, which shows the current units that are available and steps through them as the game progresses. In order to make testing quicker I have a cheat system which starts me off with plenty of money and all units are built instantly.

I've also rigged the game to start on any of the first eight levels, but I'm not going to tell anyone how to select a level – other than to say that it has nothing to do with the keyboard or joystick. I figure that this will be a reviewers's initiative test, let's see who's paying attention.

I understand that a certain conversion from a certain Spectrum game by a certain Compunetter contains some Uridium sprites. I thought it was considered polite to seek permission for such a deed if this is indeed the case. Can't say as I'm particularly enthralled at having my graphics ripped off – originality it appears, has died.

Tuesday June 9th

Another rearrangement of my source code occurred to move some more completed routines into a dark cupboard where I'm bound to need them again. On assembling I was left with something of a bug, the title screens were executing at breakneck speed, they decided not to bother with any of this 50 frames per second nonsense and go for about 300 instead. The explosions fair ripped out of the centre. A bit of exploration revealed that a routine had been corrupted by another routine running rogue. Lucky it didn't cause a disastrous corruption. Certain opcodes cause a total CPU shut down. After fixing the error I noticed that the docking sequence now takes much less CPU time, which is a pleasant surprise. I've no idea why, I expect it's magic.

Had to laugh at a CCI article on Andrew Hewson which said of Uridium, ' . . . too amazingly close, a Hewson rival commented, to a Sega coin-op that looked very like it but scrolled the other way.'

They were talking of Starforce which did indeed inspire the graphical style, but if they think the game is in any way similar then it's no wonder that their Uridium clones didn't sell. Apart from that it was very interesting, especially the picture of Cyborg Hewson, with a Manta perched on his shoulder, beats a parrot any day!

Wednesday June 10th – Monday June 15th

A brief interlude is to occur, whereby AB has a few days relaxation at Alton Towers to escape the election.



► More coding chuckles next month chums . . .

DRILLER THRILLER!

FREESCAPE™

£300 OF COMPUTER EQUIPMENT AND THE FAME AND THE GAME

could be yours in this great INCENTIVE competition ZZAP! COMP

Here at ZZAP! towers we're always interested in proving how clever our readers are, so we were pretty pleased when Ian Andrew of Incentive Software dreamed up this marvellously different (and practical) competition for the more ingenious among you.

It revolves around *Driller* and **Freescape** (TM) – and what are they, you may well ask . . . ?

Well . . . there's not a lot we can say. You see, *Driller*, Incentive's latest game project, features **Freescape** – a new 3-D technique on Incentive's 'top secret' list which they've been working on since September of 1986.

Using **Freescape**, you walk through first-person perspective and 'three-dimensional' graphics, and they're all completely solid! 'You have the freedom,' says Ian, 'to move to any point, to look in any direction from that point and see the actual view – it's just like being there!'

Now, what Ian and Incentive want from you is some great special effects to complement the game. They want whizz-bang machine-code sound effects, and lightning-brilliant graphic routines. Have a look at the side panel to see some examples of what you might attempt.

Meantime, what's in it for you? Well, the winning entry will earn its sender the top prize of **£300 worth of computer equipment** (of your choice of course), the effects routine will be incorporated in *Driller* – and the winner will be fully credited.

On top of that, the winner will also receive a copy of *Driller* as soon as it's finished.

Runners-up will each receive a copy of *Driller* and a full credit, as well as having their special effect used in the game. The number of runners-up will be decided by Incentive when they see the entries – but there'll be more than one, and fewer than 50!

HOW TO ENTER

Now for the serious bit. You can submit as many entries as you like with the one coupon below. Your machine-code entry should be on tape or disk, together with clear details of how to load and run the effect. Each routine should be less than 500 bytes long (the shorter the better), and supplied with a documented assembler listing.

Please note: do not send your entries to the usual ZZAP! address. Send them to **ZZAP! DRILLER COMPETITION, INCENTIVE SOFTWARE,** *2 Minerva House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire RG7 4QW* to arrive no later than 30 July.

JUDGING

In judging, two main criteria will be considered: **a)** how good your special effect is, and **b)** how short it is. Only original routines will be accepted. Some entries received may contain very similar effects – when this is the case, the shortest routine will be chosen.

SEND THIS COUPON WITH YOUR TAPE OR MICRODRIVE

I want to be a *Driller* Thriller!

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

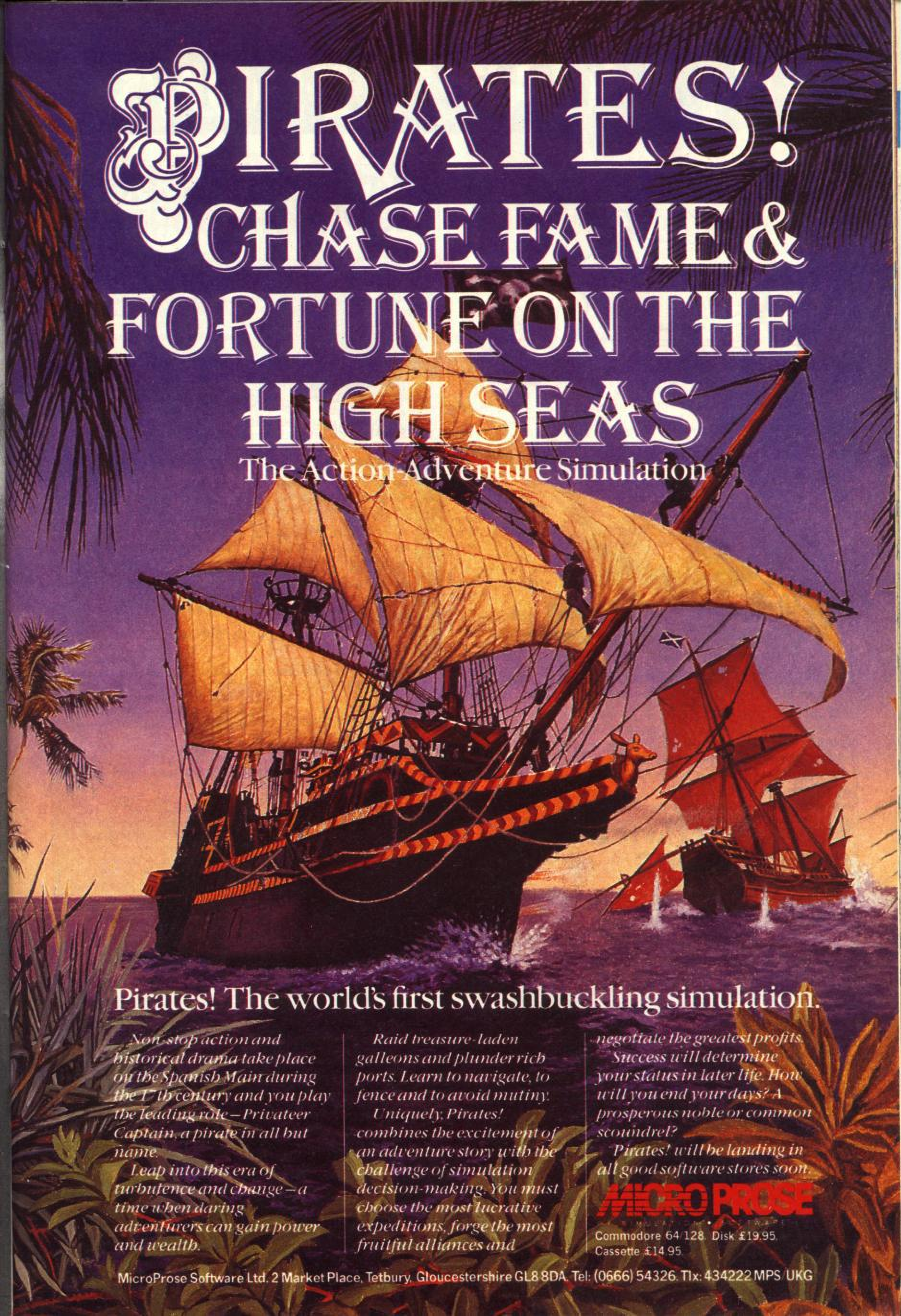
....

....**POSTCODE** ....

Some examples of effects you could submit:

SOUND
- Laser fire (incoming and outgoing)
- Gun/cannon shot
- Explosive noises
- Reward tunes/effects
- Falling and rising noises
- Bumping/cracking (into solid objects)
- (De)materialising noise
- Endgame noise/tune

LIGHT
- Border effects
- Window-clearing effects


PIRATES!
CHASE FAME & FORTUNE ON THE HIGH SEAS
The Action-Adventure Simulation
Pirates! The world's first swashbuckling simulation.
Non-stop action and historical drama take place on the Spanish Main during the 17th century and you play the leading role – Privateer Captain, a pirate in all but name.
Leap into this era of turbulence and change – a time when daring adventurers can gain power and wealth.
Raid treasure-laden galleons and plunder rich ports. Learn to navigate, to fence and to avoid mutiny.
Uniquely, Pirates! combines the excitement of an adventure story with the challenge of simulation decision-making. You must choose the most lucrative expeditions, forge the most fruitful alliances and negotiate the greatest profits.
Success will determine your status in later life. How will you end your days? A prosperous noble or common scoundrel?
Pirates! will be landing in all good software stores soon.
MICRO PROSE
Commodore 64/128. Disk £19.95. Cassette £14.95.
MicroProse Software Ltd. 2 Market Place, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8DA. Tel: (0666) 54326. Tlx: 434222 MPS/UKG

GARY LIDDON'S TECH



BROUGHT TO YOU BY GARY 'NOSHA' LIDDON

Far above the biosphere a silent spaceship skims undetected through its geostationary orbit. Deep inside, our hero sits all alone listening to the planet's voice. Only he can intercept and respond to the impassioned pleas for help from this primitive mudball . . . ah, here they come!

NIGEL'S PSYCHEDELIC COMMODORE

Dear Gary Liddon,
When I turn on my Commodore the lettering, 'Commodore Basic V2' begins flashing every different colour possible. I suspect that there's a small loose connection, but it is very frustrating as when I load a game, different parts of the screen begin flashing all those different colours. I'm sure that the fault is minor and could be put right in a about half an hour and would not cost much, but when I went to my local store, Boots, they quoted me £30.75 to get it fixed. Why so much for such a small fault? Can anyone help me get it fixed?
Nigel Collier

You lucky so and so, you wouldn't believe the amount of money people shell out to chemically synthesise that sort of whacky effect. If you're really dead set on losing this hardware pyschedelia then I'm afraid that the problem is a little more major than minor (well, half major with a bit of minor thrown in).

Inside the 64 there's a chip responsible for supplying character colour to the screen, its name is VIC II and it has probably gone sparky – either that or it's suddenly become a great Timothy Leary fan. Fixing a chip is practically impossible unless you're about one micron tall and have a degree in chip design, so the best tactic is to replace it completely.

There are companies which sell replacement VIC II's and one of the cheapest is Video Vault. Send them a cheque for £23 to VIDEO VAULT, 140 HIGH ST WEST, GLOSSOP, DERBYSHIRE, and they'll send the chip back by return of post. Fitting it is a fairly simple task, but if you're at all uneasy about opening up your 64 then VIDEO VAULT does an 'in house' repair for £35. Yes, this is more expensive than Boots, but Video Vault guarantee a 24 hour turnaround. Me, I'd stick with whacky colour schemes.

GL

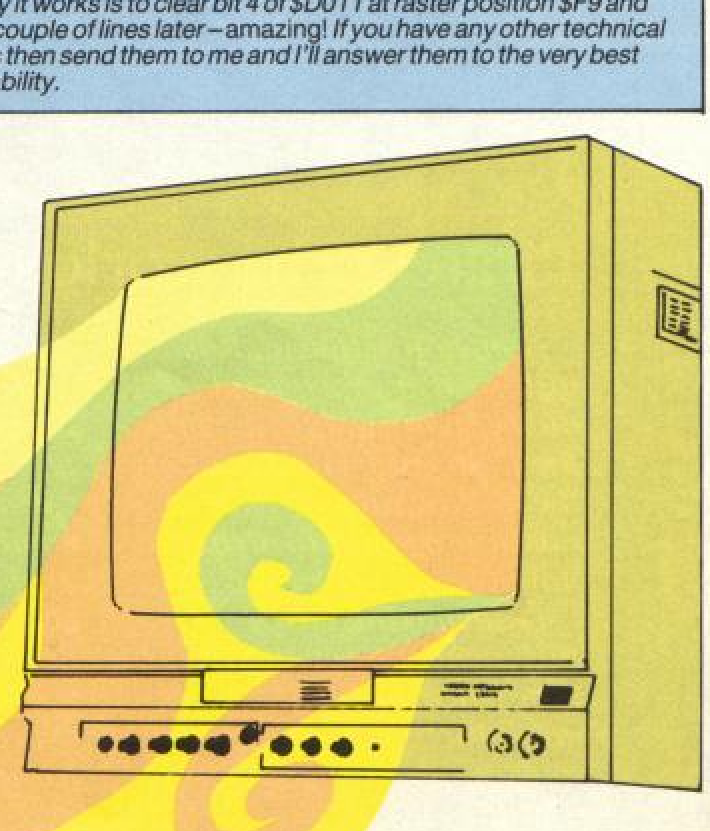
TRANSPORTING SPRITES ACROSS THE BORDER

Dear Gary,
On lots of recent games I've noticed that there seem to be sprites where the border should be. I program in machine code a bit and code lots of different effects, but I can't see any way of achieving this at all. Is it some secret VIC chip feature that Commodore never revealed, or is it a strange bug? I've tried all sorts of things but I can't seem to get it to happen. Since I'm not on Compunet and don't have any programming pals or coding chums there's nobody I can ask. Do you know how to do it?
Gaz Smith

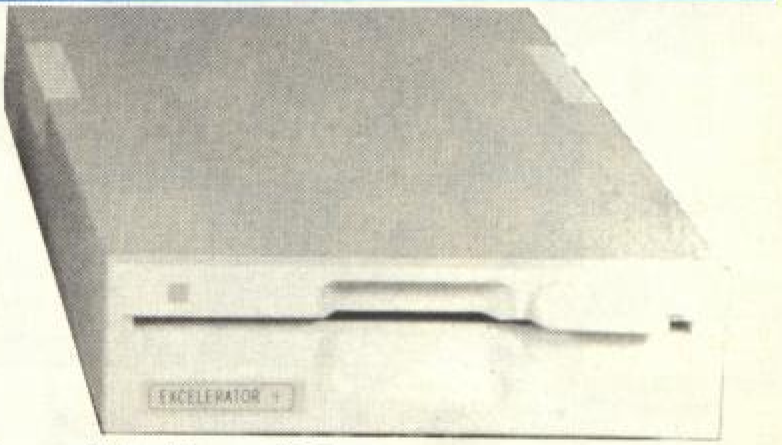
What a popular question that is. Type this in:

```
10 F=49152
20 READ A
30 IF F=255 THEN PRINT "THAT PRES-
SED YOUR HAT":SYS 49152:STOP
40 POKE F,A
50 F=F+1
60 GOTO 20
70 :
80 DATA 120, 169, 34, 141, 20, 3, 169, 192
90 DATA 141, 21, 3, 169, 249, 141, 18, 208
100 DATA 141, 14, 220, 169, 1, 141, 25,
208
110 DATA 141, 26, 208, 169, 27, 141, 17,
208
120 DATA 88, 96, 169, 1, 141, 25, 208, 238
130 DATA 32, 208, 173, 17, 208, 41, 247,
141
140 DATA 17, 208, 173, 18, 208, 208, 251,
173
150 DATA 17, 208, 41, 127, 9, 8, 141, 17
160 DATA 208, 206, 32, 208, 76, 49, 234,
255
```

When the program tells you that your hat is pressed, there should be a total lack of border for you to play with. There is probably some garbage in this new play area, but all this is a constant repetition of what's in the location $3FFF, so POKE 16383,0 and it disappears. The way it works is to clear bit 4 of $D011 at raster position $F9 and set it a couple of lines later – amazing! If you have any other technical queries then send them to me and I'll answer them to the very best of my ability.



THE EVESHAM MICRO EXCELERATOR PLUS



'Gosh, mum, Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat and what I'd like for Jesus' Birthday is a 1541 disk drive. From all reports, disk drives seem to be the slick on-line storage of the 80s – fast, reliable, cheap and cheerful. If I were so lucky to own one, then, why! I could play twice the games in half the time!'

'Oh my darling Markie, you have been led astray by the popular computer press with all their talk of bytes and baud rates! It's true that disk drives can offer large storage capacities with low retrieval time, but you have a Commodore 64 and only 1541's will work with that. What a dreary drive that is! Working serially it can only just operate faster than a turbo tape, and as it is prone to overheating you can quite easily lose valuable data as diskettes corrupt. And with Daddy getting sacked there's no way we can afford Commodore's £199.99 price tag!'

'Can I have a flick knife and a nunchucka then, mother dearest?'

'Certainly.'

Twenty years later Markie's doing time for carving a gimp up after a bar brawl. He was lucky, he'd been running the boards shortly after flunking computer science at high school. He was tough and mean, it just took the city 20 years to prove it was tougher and meaner.

A sad but familiar scenario I'm sure you'd agree, but until now unavoidable. Now however, with a blaze of technology and hype, Evesham Micros claim to have produced a totally Commodore compatible drive by the name of **Excelerator Plus** which supposedly:

a) Operates 20 per cent faster (and more efficiently) than a normal Commodore drive.
b) Is totally compatible with all existing C64 software.
c) Is cheaper than Commodore equipment.
d) Looks nicer.

Are these claims accurate? Follow me on a great voyage of discovery into realms of excitement which you never dreamed existed to find the answers to these and many other questions.

Is their Dad bigger than Commodore's Dad?

Well . . . sort of. A major claim to fame for the **Excelerator Plus** is the supposed 20 per cent speed increase in reading/writing files to the disk. Testing this out seemed a good place to start, so with Casio stopwatch in hand I spent half an hour loading and saving stupidly large files in and out of memory on both the 1541 and the Excelerator only to find that Evesham had exaggerated their speed advantage a little . . . by about 20 per cent in fact.

Loading the largest file I could possibly load (254 blocks) there only seemed to be about three seconds difference between the two machines, the Excelerator only just pipping the 1541 at the post. Three seconds isn't a lot of time, try brushing your teeth in that and you'll have bleeding gums before you can say Ouch! All I can assume is that time runs faster in Evesham, or that the 1541 I raced against had been taking Sanatogen. This doesn't surprise me, as in order to maintain compatitbility with CBM drives the Excelerator's ROMs have to operate very similarly to Commodore's, and they're what makes the 1541 run so slow. That's the catch 22 of third party disk drive manufacture I'm afraid.

What the E+ can do quicker is format a disk, at around the 20 second mark this operation is quite fast and considerably quiet compared to the machine gunning (tm AEB) 1541.

A really handy feature is the addition of two external dip switches which allow the device number be easily changed, an operation on the 1541 that involves fiddly messing about with its innards.

Compatible: Yes or No?

Strange and curious though it may seem, I found the E+ to be more 1541 compatible than the 1541. *Empire*, a disk which I've never yet got to load on my 1541, booted into action in no time at all even through the loading rigours of Firebird's *Para Protect* (having looked at the game I wished that it hadn't . . . but that's another story). Evesham's drive is certainly more compatible with existing software than the 1570, 1571 and 1541C's of this world giving CBM a bit of an own goal. Nothing new there. With new software the best policy is to try before you buy, but I don't envisage any problems arising.

Is it cheaper than Commodore Equipment?

Yes it is. 1541's used to be £199.99 but you can't get those any more – their 1541C replacement of the 1541 is exactly the same price. An Excelerator Plus is £159.99, but since the 1541 is now discontinued it's possible to pick one up quite cheaply – apparently there's a place in Chelmsford that knocks 'em out for £130. Unless you live in Chelmsford the E+ is quite a good deal, and for extra added VFM Evesham are currently running a super bargain mega-deal where for a mere £179.95 you get a *Freeze Frame MKIV* thrown in as well.

Marilyn Monroe or Susan Tully?

Is the E+ prettier? As you probably know aesthetics are purely subjective, but if you're not prepared to listen to my point of view then why not go and read the tips or the contents page or something. Slim, seductive, sexy, super, sizzling and snoggable (and lots of other alliterative adjectives) are all words that I can apply to the E+ – in short, it looks really nice. By releasing this slim new summer number, Evesham have really made an impact on hardware fashion scene. A nice feature is the total lack of the rubbish CBM drive shut/close mechanism, a destroyer of dozens of data disks through mis-operation.

A small disadvantage of the E+'s waif-like looks is that there's no room inside for a transformer, so there's an external one. The one I had was not a pretty sight, with wild and whacky flames leaping down the side it looked like my cousin's Capri (and was just as chunky) but luckily this isn't the PSU they're despatching to end users.

I'd rather buy an Excelerator Plus than a 1541C or a 1570 or a 1571. If I could get one cheaper then I'd rather buy a 1541 but they're hard to get hold of now. The thing about 1541's is that they're totally 1541 compatible and if you want to upgrade to a super turbo system like Dolphindos or Phantom then that's quite easy. Fair to Evesham, they did say they are going to offer Dolphindos as an external board, but unless it's packaged prettily the whole thing will look like a prolapse and I suspect tricky to fit. If you are going to buy a new disk drive and don't care about my pathetic reservations then this is the one for you. A good product at a good price. Just send a cheque for £159.95 to EVESHAM MICROS, 63 BRIDGE STREET, EVESHAM, WORCESTER WR11 4SF.

DRESS TO IMPRESS

Beige is the worst colour in the whole world – *it's rubbish!* McDonalds' uniforms and Commodore 64s are beige and it's taken CBM four years to suss that beige is totally unhip and subsequently release the 64C. If you have a dreary old 64 and want to get gear then the Evesham Slimline is the great new fashion accessory for you. With the merest flick of screwdriver (younger owners are advised to get an adult to help) you'll be strolling down Pose Boulevard. For a mere £19.95 you can be the proud owner of a plastic cream case which will replace your old one and . . . um . . . do very little else. I suppose if this sort of thing is important to you then it's worth getting, otherwise it isn't – but I'm sure you can figure that out by yourself. Anyway it's a lot cheaper to dunk your 64 in a can of Dulux. If anyone out there has customised their 64 to their own taste then send a picture in and we'll immortalise you and your machine.



That just about rounds up our brief but passionate encounter for this month, but I'll be back soon with a range of reviews and views on great new hardware. Bye for now and keep 'em peeled.

THE HOME OFFICE



MINI OFFICE II

Database, £16.95 cass, £19.95 disk

Tired out after a hard day's insider trading, our resident city whizz-kid Steve Jarratt takes a look at the Commodore 64's biggest-selling utility

BUSINESS utilities for home computers are usually met with less than open arms by the majority of micro owners. *Mini Office II* is therefore seen as something of an enigma amongst software distributors, in that it has outsold any other utility for the 64, and can match many games for the speed of sale and number of units moved.

It's a piece of business software that provides all the necessary functions of a small business computer in one package. There are six separate elements, including a Word Processor, Database, Spreadsheet, Graphics System, Communications Facility and a Label Printer program. Each module is loaded separately and the main series of options is accessed by a menu/highlighted selection system via keyboard or joystick.

Perhaps the most immediately useful and widely appealing element is the Word Processor, which boasts a workspace of roughly 30K (30,490 available characters), comprehensive file handling system including merge facilities, and the ever useful 'search and replace' function.

Creation of documents follows a standard word processor pattern, using a floating cursor to write within the text, and a full series of commands for the deletion and reorganisation of text, including the insertion and removal of text blocks.

Finished documents may be saved to disk or tape and printed out using one of the many printers that the program supports – Commodore and Epson are immediately compatible, and there is the option to connect other printers via an RS232 interface.

There are many options within the printer facility to make use of the features available on the more expensive machines, such as double width or double height characters, justification and embedded commands, which enables the font styles to be changed. There are also a range of line commands which alter the structure of the printed text, and page commands to govern page layout, headings and page numbering.

A Database is a convenient way of storing information, as would be achieved by the use of a filing cabinet containing records. The computer equivalent of this places information in 'files', each file holding a set amount of 'cards' containing the itemised data.

On first using the Database in *Mini Office II*, a file structure must be defined, telling the computer the number, size and type of fields used on each card. A 'field' is the area within each card that actually contains the information, be it alphabetical or numerical. *Mini Office II* is designed to hold up to 20 fields per card, with each field holding as many as 60 characters.

Records created may be saved to tape or disk, can be amended or deleted as required, and sorted by whatever field label is necessary by use of a 'search and mark' option. This enables you to find particular items of information quickly, without having to hunt through the entire card.

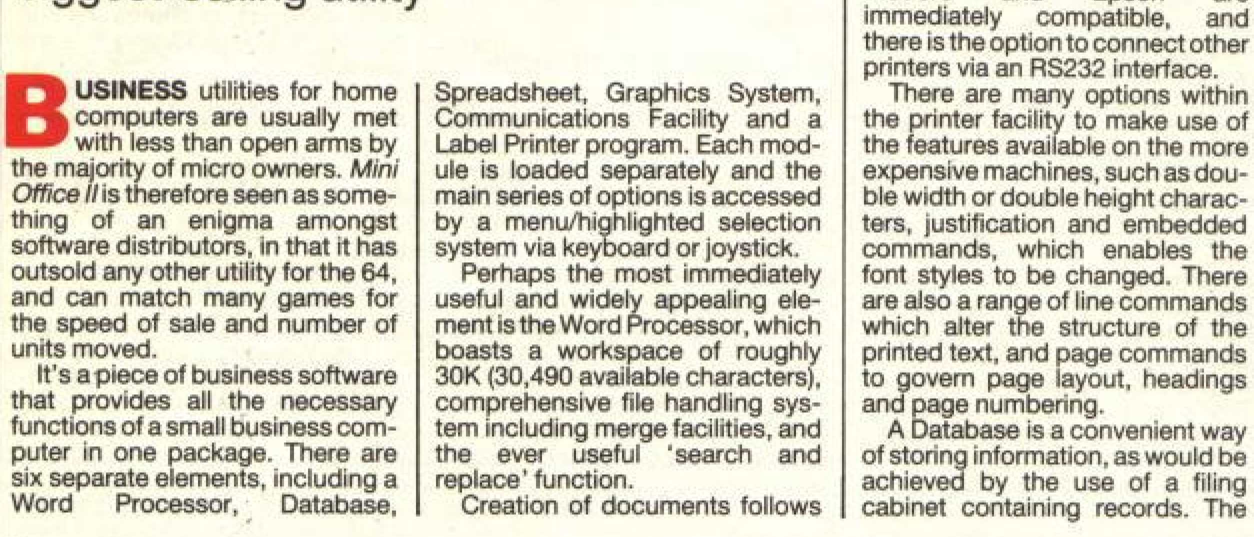
This facility can be used for a variety of applications from business records to itemising and organising a persons' collection.

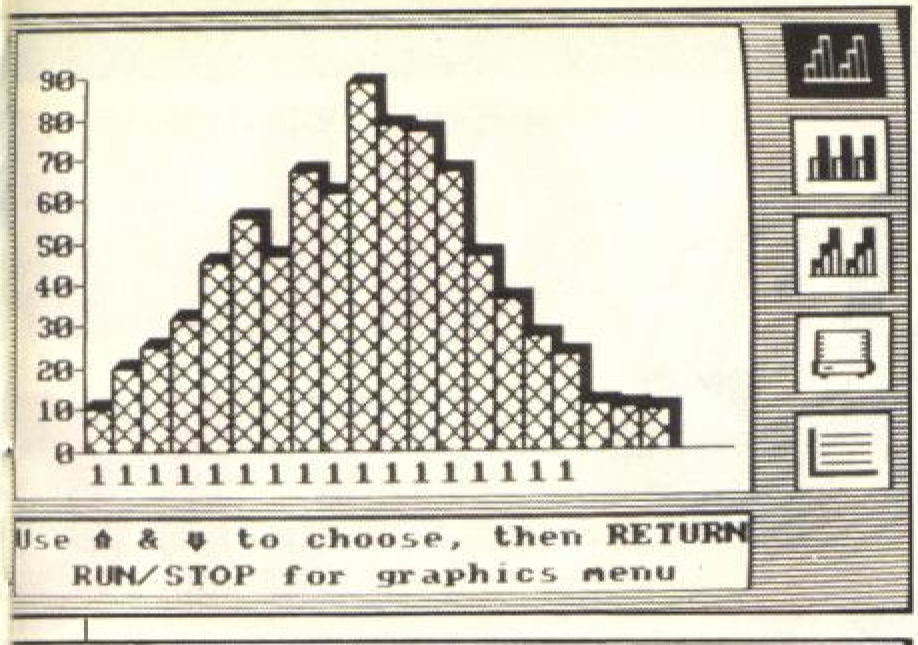
Applications involving repetitive, lengthy or complex calculations are helped by the use of Spreadsheets. These are tables of data that are used by the computer to perform calculations without the need for constantly typing and retyping complete sets of data.

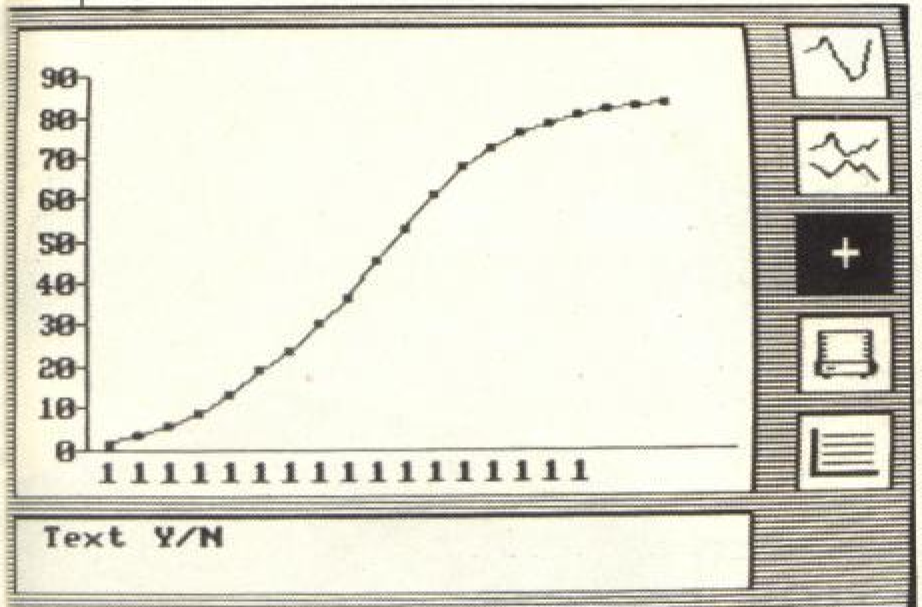
The *Mini Office II* Spreadsheet uses a two-dimensional matrix to hold data, effectively made up of a specified number of rows and columns. Each row and column has a label and the intersection of these is termed a 'cell'. The cell contains a piece of data which is then identified by the corresponding label of the row and the column. The Spreadsheet can hold up to 4000 cells, with a maximum of 99 rows or 120 columns.

Calculations may then be carried out by addressing the equation in use to a series of row and column labels rather than the data itself, the result being entered into a different cell. This means that a series of calculations may be carried out on the same set of data, or on the results of previous calculations with the minimum handling of data.

The result of Spreadsheet calculations may also be used in graphical representations by using the Graphics module. This enables the user to create bar charts, line







graphs or pie charts by entering data directly, or by loading Spreadsheet data from tape or disk. Once entered, the data is fully editable and the program can handle up to 400 pieces of data over 20 data sets.

Each display may itself be rendered in different graphical styles, enabling up to eight individual graphs to be created from the same set of information.

The most unusual aspect of the package is the inclusion of a communications program. Communication between computers (such as across the telephone lines via a modem) is possible only when the two (or more) systems use a common 'protocol' or language.

The program offered by *Mini Office II* supplies the two most most commonly used protocols (Microlink/Telecom Gold (300) and (1200)) on a menu which can simply be loaded into the computer as required. Any non-standard protocols may also be used by accessing the 'protocol options', which allows the characteristics of the protocol to be easily specified. (For the technically minded, this involves altering the baud rate, Xon/Xoff, frame format and filtering of the signals exchanged).

Finally, a label printer is supplied, which is more or less self-explanatory. This allows sheets of up to seven labels across to be printed, either identically or individually. Label designs may be created and used directly or saved to tape or disk.

All six modules are fully hardware supportive, which means that it's an ideal starting point for those wishing to expand their system. Owners of the previous *Mini Office* are also catered for in that it includes a utility to convert files for the original utility to *Mini Office II*, allowing full use of the improved features available in the later release.

The package comes complete with an 86 page instruction booklet, which is thoughtfully written and has a multitude of examples and possible applications for the modules included on the program. It also contains a helpful summary of the word processor commands.

Mini Office II contains too many features and facilities to cover in depth within the limited space available, but it must be said that the package is surprisingly professional and comprehensive. The Spreadsheet and Database modules are complicated to use, but necessarily so due to the nature of their application, and the manner in which they work.

Mini Office II is worthy of purchase even if only one of the modules is to be employed (I can recommend it on the strength of the Word Processor alone, which is extremely good), but viewed as a complete package, it represents tremendous value for money and its current success is truly well deserved.

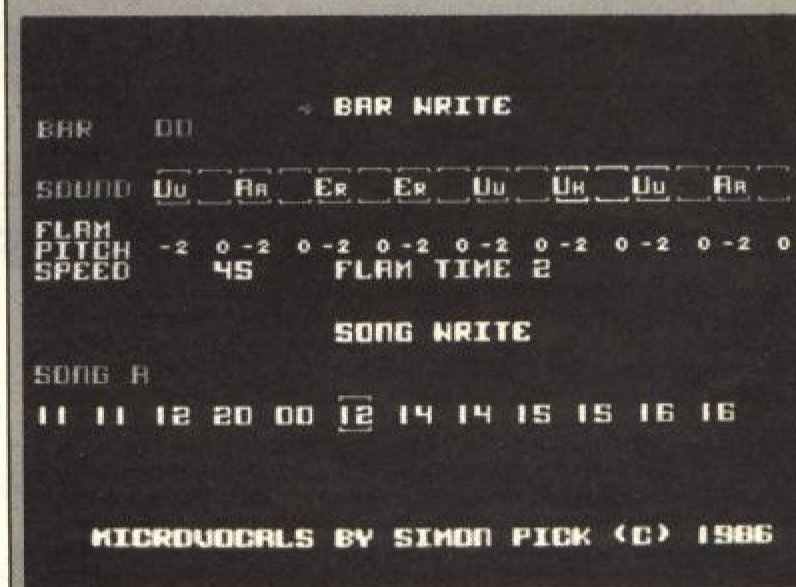
NOTE: The disk version of *Mini Office II* was reviewed and although the cassette version has not been seen, it is obvious that many of the facilities such as the transferral of data from one module to another, and the storage and retrieval of data, while still being possible, is certainly made less accessible by using a cassette-based system.

GUARANTEED TO BREAK THE ICE AT PARTIES . .

MICRORHYTHM PLUS

Firebird, £1.99 cass

Following the immense success of Microrhythm, Simon Pick (author of the memorable Dare Devil Dennis and Mad Nurse, and converter of Nemesis to the 64) has produced Microrhythm Plus featuring four new sound sets. Jenny Taylor takes a look and gives her opinion.



MICROLATIN

Everybody Salsa, as a multitude of Rhumbas, Sambas and Tangos can be produced from this distinctly mediterranean package (surely they're South American steps – Ed). Oh all right then, make some Black Lace sounds that Mussolini might appreciate . . . is that better?

MICRODISCO

Jack your body, dig the groove, and strut your funky stuff around the living room with 13 'Electro' sounds, including cymbals, drums, and claps. Yo, swing it, bro'.

MICROVOCALS

Ooh, ah, uh, ooh, ah. Ta ta ta. Yeah! Hey! 13 vocal delights to amuse and enthuse. Immensely lifelike sampled vocals provide some often hilarious effects.

MICROTUNED

Level 42 watch out! Funk to your heart's content with seven bass samples, a drum or two, and some powerful pulses.

The presentation is identical to the original Microrhythm, with three easy to use modes of operation – Bar Write, Song Write and Live Play.

Using the Live Play option you can bash away at the keyboard like merry hell, and drive your parents insane with your startling renditions of a multitude of Frankie Goes to Hollywood bass lines.

Bar Write allows you to construct up to 100 different bars of up to 16 beats in length. The tempo can be changed for each bar, and the pitch of each beat altered (with a choice between 16 different pitch settings).

Using the Song Write feature, bars are sequenced to produce a tune. A maximum of 99 bars can be strung together, and sequences saved to tape for future use.

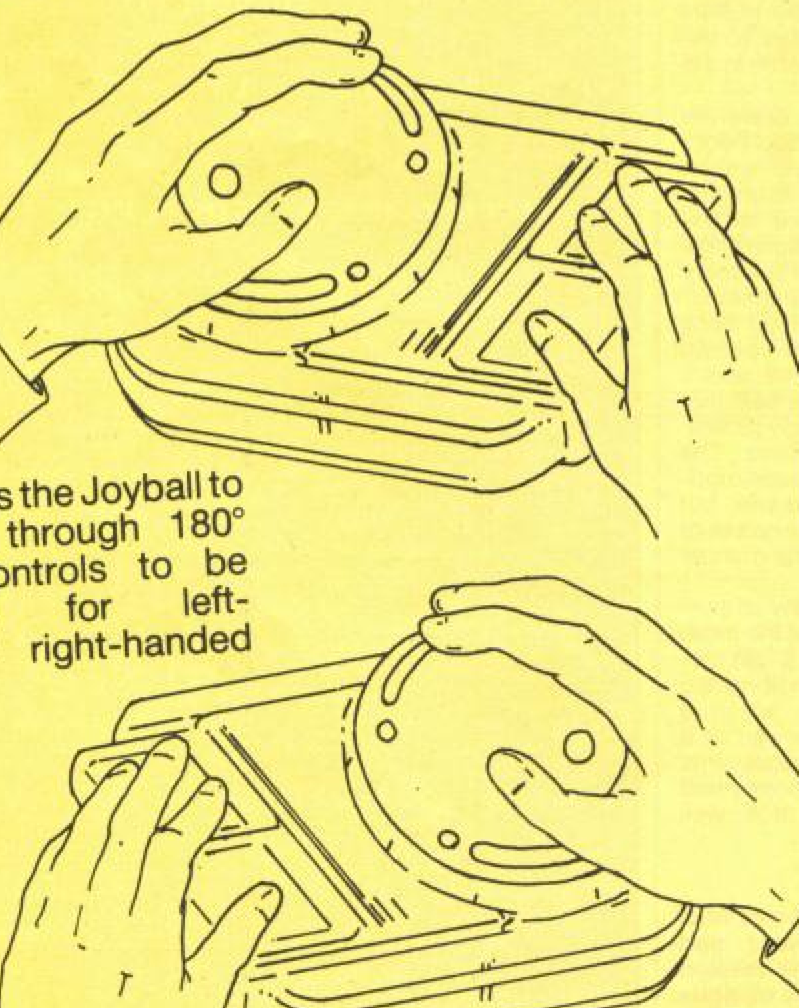
For two quid, Microrhythm Plus represents an even better buy than its predecessor. It's easy to use, great fun and produces results which are more often than not impressive.

GRA
JO

TAKE OUT A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO BRITAIN'S BRIGHTEST COMMODORE SOFTWARE MAGAZINE AND WE'LL GIVE YOU THIS GREAT *SPECTRAVIDEO* JOYBALL



LEFT OR RIGHT-HANDED OPERATION



Switch allows the Joyball to be rotated through 180° and the controls to be reorientated for left-handed or right-handed players.

QUICKSHOT IX 'JOYBALL' CONTROLLER

Large Spherical X-Y Controller with pivoting action
Two Enlarged Fire Buttons for left or right-handed play (see separate panel)
Auto-Fire Switch toggles between single or continuous fire (see below)
Left/Right Fire Selector Switch
5-Foot Sleeve Cable with standard Atari D-connector
Subject to normal Spectravideo warranties

GREAT SUBSCRIPTION OFFER !

AB A FREE OYBALL!



Here's the deal: You take out a year's subscription to ZZAP! 64 (12 issues post included) for a mere £15 (£22 if you live outside the UK), and Denise will send you, *absolutely free*, a Spectravideo Joyball controller worth almost £20. Can't say fairer than that – except that existing subscribers get a chance of a cheapo deal on the controller as well . . . read on . . .

FOR EXISTING SUBSCRIBERS

If you already have a subscription to ZZAP! 64, then you can get your hands on the amazingly globular shape of a Spectravideo 'Joyball' at the special ZZAP! Subscribers' price of only £4.95 (not subject to any other discounts). Just fill in the form, give Denise your Subscriber Number, and she'll do the rest. If your sub is running out in a month or so, and you would like to take advantage of the FREE offer, quote your Subscriber Number and indicate in the appropriate box which issue number you would like the extended subscription to run from.

DEAR DENISE

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PLEASE NOTE THE NEW ADDRESS!

WINNERS!

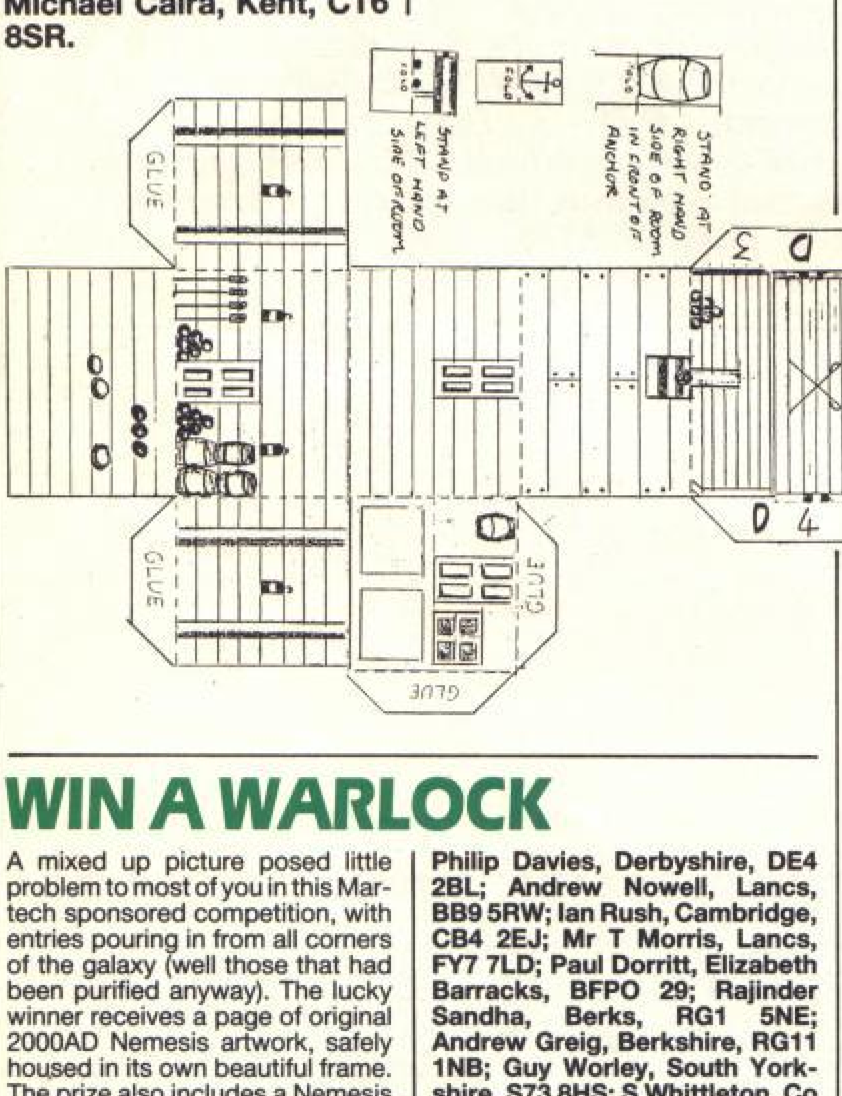
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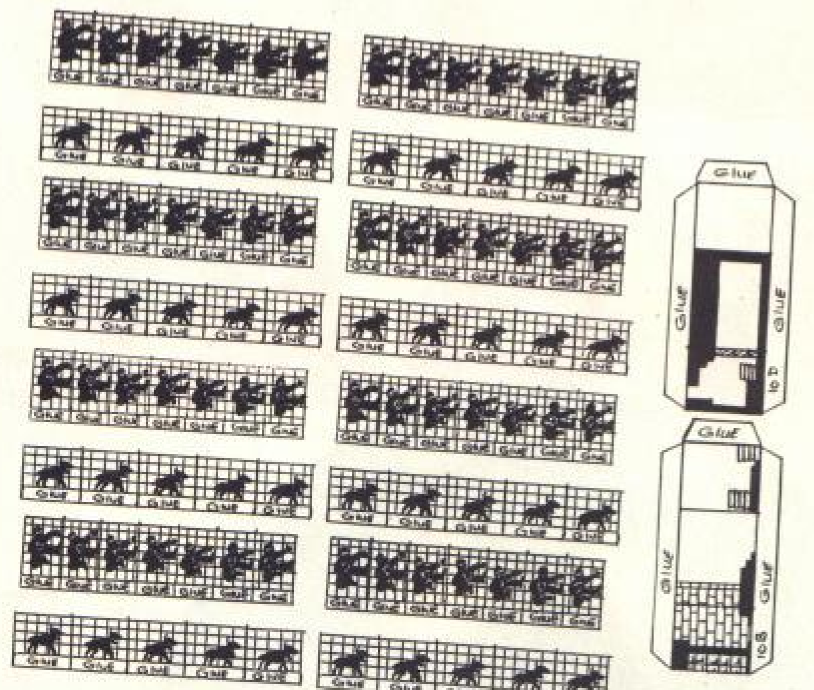
THREE DIMENSIONAL WINNERS

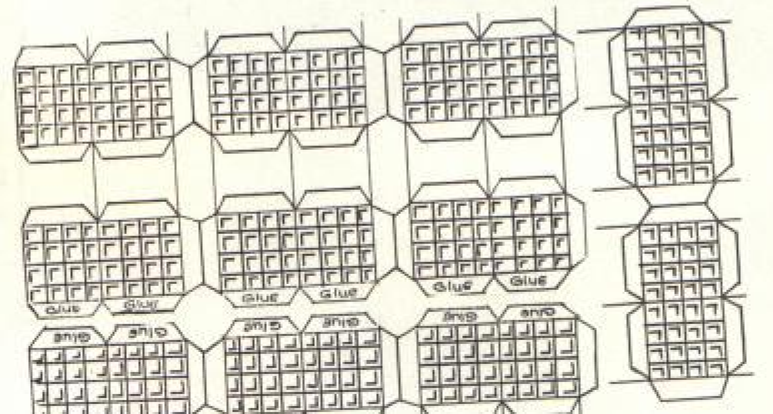
Our own 3D map competition inspired you all to your greatest heights of creativity ever – and consequently had us sitting in the office pretending to be John Noakes for days on end. When we finally made it through the mountain of paper cuttings and dried glue which accumulated during the deliberations we had emerged with two clear winners. The two cartographers who will each receive a Commodore 1541 disk drive for their troubles are . . .

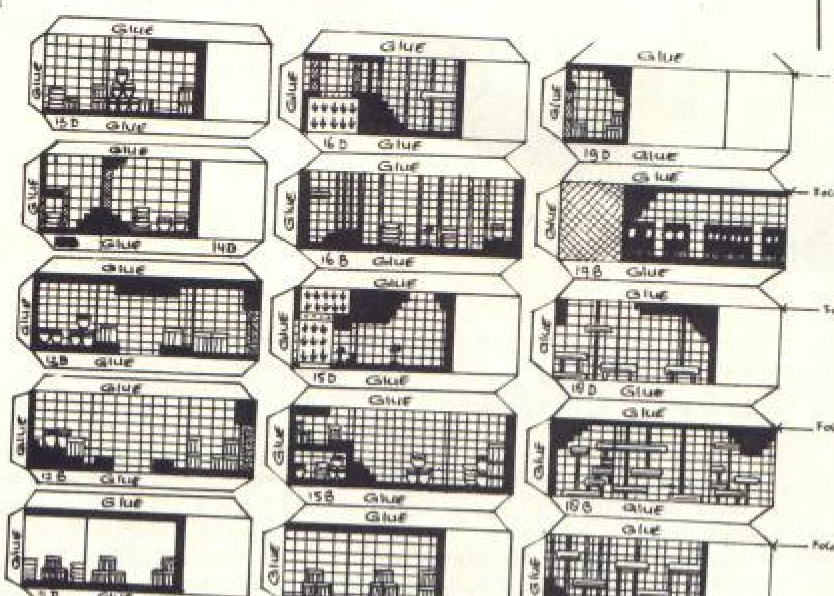
Marcel Douwstra, Naarden, The Netherlands and Michael Caira, Kent, CT6 8SR.

Ten runners up will each receive a Zzap! T Shirt and cap, they are: **R Wallman, Dormansland, Surrey; Stuart Pool, West Glamorgan, SA2 7EX; Paul Spittlehouse, North Humberside, HU12 9AF; Michael Child, North Yorkshire, YO14 4PW; John Cryer, South Glamorgan, CF6 4JQ; Earl Bradshaw, Lancashire, OL7 9RA; Michael Sorensen, 9440 Abybro, Denmark; Martin McKinney, Dorset, BH6 4DQ; Anthony N Hughes, Mid Glamorgan, CF42 6TN; Michael Kemp, Cornwall, TR1 3NB.**









WIN A WARLOCK

A mixed up picture posed little problem to most of you in this Martech sponsored competition, with entries pouring in from all corners of the galaxy (well those that had been purified anyway). The lucky winner receives a page of original 2000AD Nemesis artwork, safely housed in its own beautiful frame. The prize also includes a Nemesis T Shirt and a copy of the game. The winner is . . .

B Murray, Ilford, Essex.

The second prize of five Titan Nemesis books, a T Shirt and a copy of the game was won by **Charles Harris, Lancs, FY6 8EE.** Five third prizes of a T Shirt, book five in the Nemesis series and a copy of the game will go to: **David Monk, Essex, IG8 8BE; B Robson, North Humberside, YO15 2HD; Mr Paul Bevan, Beds, LU5 5PN; Barry Mooney, Northern Ireland, BD35 6HD; Andy Edge, London, E11 4PS.**

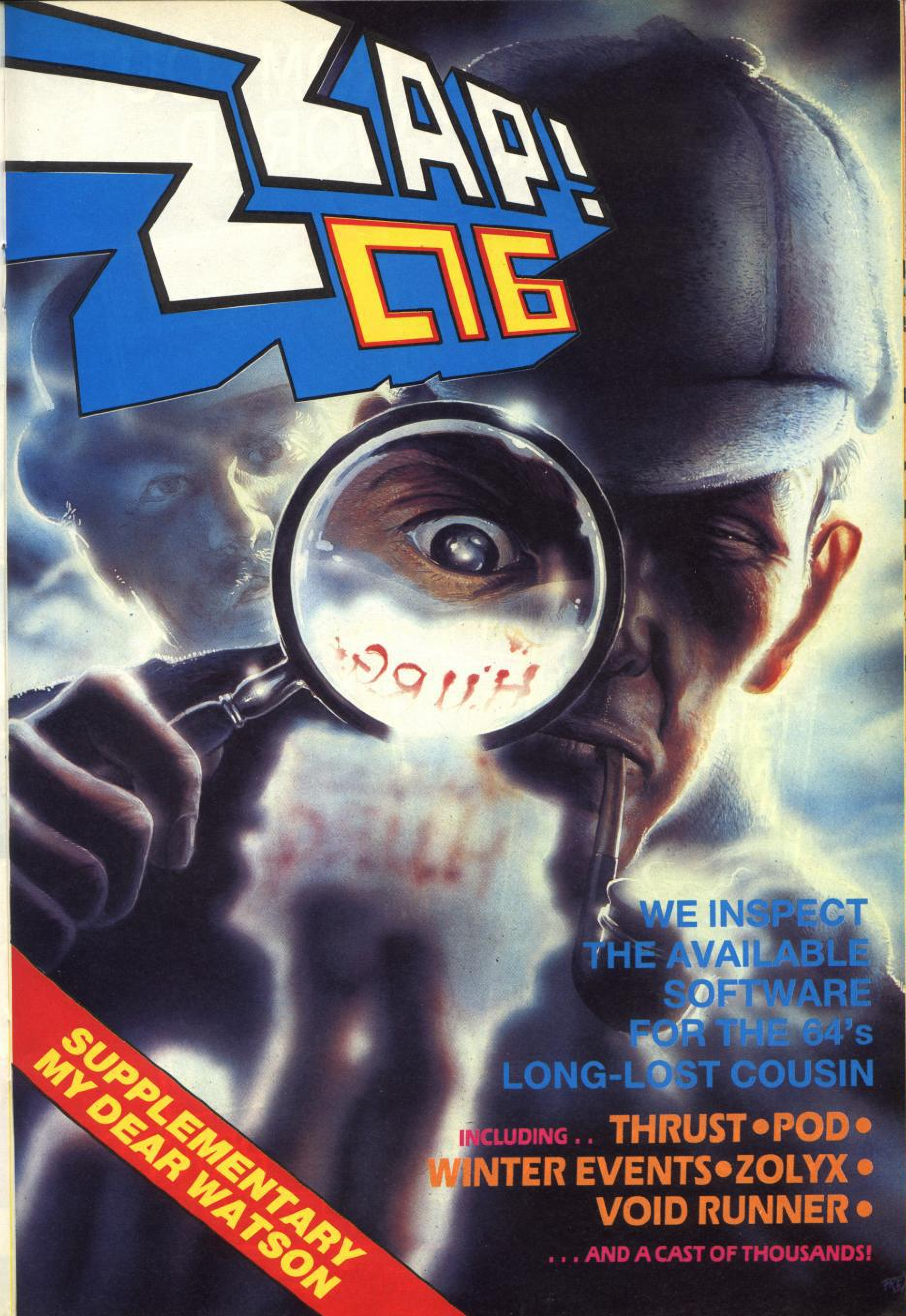
And finally, the following 25 runners-up will each receive a copy of the game.

Philip Davies, Derbyshire, DE4 2BL; Andrew Nowell, Lancs, BB9 5RW; Ian Rush, Cambridge, CB4 2EJ; Mr T Morris, Lancs, FY7 7LD; Paul Dorritt, Elizabeth Barracks, BFPO 29; Rajinder Sandha, Berks, RG1 5NE; Andrew Greig, Berkshire, RG11 1NB; Guy Worley, South Yorkshire, S73 8HS; S Whittleton, Co Durham, TS29 6BB; Graham Hartshorn, BFPO 24; Phil Toomey, Oxford, OX4 2JN; Alexander Graham, RAF Wildenrath, BFPO 42; Philip Sanderson, York, YO2 2LF; David Fox, Near Sheffield, S18 5DR; Steven Downey, Northern Ireland, BT14 8NR; S Parkinson, Lancs, WN4 0XJ; John Tait, Ross-shire, IV17 0RB; Darren Davies, Exeter, Devon; S A O'Donnell, Devon, EX31 4RB; Gavin Bland, Derbyshire, S41 0JJ; J Allsey, Bedford, MK45 3AH; Toby Clark, Berkshire, SL6 6QS; Martin Eshelby, Bucks, HP16 0NJ; David Moyle, Bristol, BS4 1HU; Mark Dodgson, Nr Wigan, WN5 7LG.

CHART VOTING DRAW WINNERS

WINNER (£40 worth of software plus a ZZAP! T-Shirt): **Scott Webb**, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 6DB

RUNNERS UP (ZZAP! T-Shirt and Cap): **Richard Wotherspoon**, Ayrshire, Scotland; **Sebastian Richard**, Cathcart Road, London SW10 GNN; **Owen Williams**, Ingleside, Bath, Avon BA1 5SU; **Gareth Rowlands**, Malin Bridge, Sheffield S65 FD.


ZZAP! C16
WE INSPECT THE AVAILABLE SOFTWARE FOR THE 64's LONG-LOST COUSIN
INCLUDING . . THRUST • POD • WINTER EVENTS • ZOLYX • VOID RUNNER •
. . . AND A CAST OF THOUSANDS!
SUPPLEMENTARY MY DEAR WATSON

SWEET SIXTEEN

NO, this supplement doesn't mark the start of regular C16 coverage – it's a sort of extended feature: a look at what the Commodore 64's popular cousin has to offer, which surprising as it may seem, is a lot for the price.

Within these eight distinctly separate pages is a mini-encyclopaedia which isn't intended to be a definitive guide to C16 software – it's merely a fairly comprehensive round-up of all the software we could get our hands on, and it represents a worthwhile read.

Getting to grips with the C16/Plus 4 brought memories of my VIC 20 days flooding back. The VIC 20 was my first computer, which cost around £200 then, and the software was generally crude in all aspects. But despite the limitations and crudeness, it was extremely entertaining. With only 3.5K to spare on the basic machine, programmers couldn't afford to mess around with slick graphics – the gameplay and coding had to be tight and efficient. Their were a few absolute gems on the VIC 20 which still hold their own in the world of today's software – Jeff Minter's *Laser Zone*, *Matrix* and *Hellgate*, Commodore's superlative *Jelly Monsters* ROM (sadly removed from sale due its uncanny similarity to a well known Atari arcade game) and Rabbit's *Myriad* to name but a few.



The quality and quantity of C16 software seems to be akin to that for the VIC 20 – a fair amount of playable dross exists, but there are a few classy releases which seem to lose something when converted to more powerful machines – *POD* and *Voidrunner* being two prime examples of games which are more playable on the C16 than on the 64. A few software houses still support the C16/Plus 4, and sales are apparently healthy. Mastertronic and Anco seem to pay a great deal of attention to producing quality products – in many cases superior to C64 software. Most of the poorer software comes in the form of conversions from more powerful machines, which is sad as this tends to overshadow the more inspiring original productions with virtually no pretentions to being anything special.

So, what do the C16 and Plus 4 have to offer . . . ?

Well, there's a superior BASIC to that implemented in the 64, although the user manual supplied isn't particularly helpful – Commodore seem to have difficulty in producing decent documentation. The BASIC features over 75 commands, including a competent range of graphics commands.

The C16 doesn't offer anything significantly new – 121 colours (well, 128 – but eight are shades of black) – no, if anything it's a regression with its mere 16K memory. Which prompts one to wonder why on earth Commodore bothered to release it in the first place, especially at its original price. That said, since the C16 failed to make an impact until it was significantly reduced in price, it is worthy of consideration.

The Plus 4 has 64K RAM, with 60K available for BASIC programming (the C64 only has 38K to play with). There's a built-in machine code monitor with 17 commands, and a very useful HELP function – should an error occur in a BASIC program, pressing the HELP key highlights the error.

Both machines are compatible with the 1541 disk drive and 1571 monitor, however a special cassette deck is required, as are special joysticks – Konix's are recommended as the Commodore brand isn't up to much.

Check out your local branches of Dixon's, Curry's, Rumbelows and Comet – you may find you can pick up a C16 and cassette deck for around £50, or the slightly more powerful but fully compatible Plus 4 for around £80 (with cassette deck). Alternatively, you could try telephoning Video Vault (04574 66555/67761) and ask them very nicely if they have any Plus 4s in stock.

GARY PENN

POD
Mastertronic, £1.99

Minter-inspired shoot 'em up action, courtesy of Shaun Southern. More accomplished and playable than the 64 conversion, with chunky graphics, meaty sound and gallons of playability.

OVERALL 92%

BANDITS AT ZERO
MAD, £2.99

Blast everything in sight, and destroy the enemy's aircraft carrier in this addictive shoot 'em up with excellent parallax scrolling.

OVERALL 75%

CLASSIC SNOOKER
Anco, £6.95

Plays okay, but the screen tends to flicker quite violently at times and can prove most off-putting.

OVERALL 51%

DORK'S DILEMMA
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Help Dork to collect and reassemble the pieces of his spacecraft in this very playable game. The graphics are clear and well defined, and overall this is a very good collect 'em up.

OVERALL 83%

PROJECT NOVA
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

A below average variation on the *Star Raiders* theme – simple shoot 'em up action, with the tiniest sprinkling of strategy thrown in for good measure.

OVERALL 40%

HEKTIK
Mastertronic, £1.99

An accurate version of the dated arcade game *Space Panic* – simplistic platforms and ladders action which provides a few hours' entertainment, and a chance to reminisce.

OVERALL 63%

BOUNDER/PLANET SEARCH
Gremlin Graphics, £7.95

BOUNDER

Move Bounder from slab to slab, across the screen to safety, avoiding the many and varied obstacles in the way. The graphics are very detailed and smooth moving, and addiction sets in as soon as you start to play.

OVERALL 89%

ROCKMAN
Mastertronic, £1.99

Ricky Rockman rushes around caverns collecting diamonds, and dodging deadly boulders. The lack of speed ruins the playability, as avoiding falling rocks is more often than not impossible.

OVERALL 26%

THAI BOXING
Anco, £6.95

This Anco release bears a significant similarity to Thai Boxing on the *Sport Four* compilation. The combatants movements are totally unrealistic and the backgrounds are bland. It feels bad, and offers little for the price.

OVERALL 20%

BERKS
The Power House, £1.99

Should actually be entitled *Baby Berks* – the fourth in the Berks Trilogy. Contains one single screen of shooting, which isn't as interesting or playable as its forerunners.

OVERALL 41%

DIAMOND MINE
Blue Ribbon, £2.99

Guide a pipeline through the mine, collecting diamonds and avoiding the walls and bugs. The pipe is difficult to control, and not really worth the effort of mastering. Poor graphics and tedious gameplay round off this sub-standard product.

OVERALL 23%

MEGABOLTS
Mastertronic, £1.99

Odd shoot 'em up action set in a maze. Strangely addictive.
OVERALL 61%

STAR GAMES
Gremlin Graphics, £9.99

SWORD OF DESTINY
The main character and hostiles look nice and move well, but the platform action is just too boring and predictable to be worthwhile.
OVERALL 36%

XCELLOR 8
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Beautifully smooth scrolling bas-relief backdrops, but not much fast or enthralling action.
OVERALL 39%

XARGON WARS
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Simplistic and tedious shoot 'em up action, a sort of souped up *Space Invaders* really.
OVERALL 38%

OBLIDO
Mastertronic, £1.99

An odd little game which has you attempting to put colour blocks into their respective 'areas'. Initially confusing, but very playable.
OVERALL 83%

HYPERFORCE
Ariolasoft, £6.95

Original shoot 'em up action, but nonetheless dull.
OVERALL 39%

WINTER EVENTS
Anco, £7.95

An inspired mix of six snowy sporting events, spread over a single cassette multi-load.



▲ Lots of wintry fun to be had in Anco's WINTER EVENTS

SKI JUMP
Partake in a wintry long-jump, and attempt to break the world record for ski-clad flight.
SPEED SKATING
A one or two player event which requires perfectly-timed joystick waggling.
BIATHLON
A gruelling race on skis over a beautiful country track, with only a .22 calibre rifle for company. Ski through valleys and up and down hills between four separate points, which is where the gun comes into play as you try to hit five targets with only five shots.
BOBSLEIGH
Steer a bobsleigh left and right as you hurtle down the ice track.
DOWNHILL SKIING
Ski down a lengthy wooded course, displayed in glorious and very effective 3D.
SLALOM
More skiing, only this time there are flags to negotiate.

Each of the six events is extremely playable in its own right, and combined they form an excellent package which shouldn't be overlooked.
OVERALL 94%



BOOTY
Firebird, £1.99

Take control of Jim the cabin boy, in this mediocre platform game with nautical overtones. The graphics and sound are weak (an ear-wrenching tune plays throughout), and although quite playable at first, interest wanes due to repetition.
OVERALL 54%

G'MAN
Code Masters

In this game our hero G Man has only seven minutes to catch the Moon bus back to the Space Shuttle, and to make matters worse his air is getting low. The graphics are functional, but the playability is low due to the lack of variety.
OVERALL 37%

LEGIONNAIRE
Anco, £7.95

Derivative of the arcade game *Commando*, with good graphics but not much playability.
OVERALL 51%

BRIDGEHEAD
Anco, £7.95

Being a macho hard man, you've been picked to undertake a dangerous mission in this very playable *Green Beret* -type game. The graphics are good, and there's a decent piece of music on the title screen. Overall, a good hack and blast 'em game.
OVERALL 75%

SPORT 4
Anco, £7.95

As the name suggests there are four sports games on this tape – Speed Boat Grand Prix, European Cup Championship, Canoe Slalom and Thai Boxing. The graphics are small and crude, and sound is mainly confined to a few simple effects. Overall though, this is a good collection of simplistic games.
OVERALL 45%

KIK START
Mastertronic, £1.99

A horizontally scrolling race game in which you have to beat the clock. Bears little similarity to its 64 counterpart, but it's still fairly playable.
OVERALL 84%

ZOLYX
Firebird, £1.99

Zolyx is a spot who lives in a black rectangular arena bordered by a thin blue line. His life is a dangerous one as he is constantly troubled by two sorts of renegade spots – the type which bounce around inside the walls of the arena, and another sort which run around the arena border. The only way to survive their deadly touch is to keep on the move – and this is where problems arise.

Zolyx can move around the arena perimeter quite happily, but is eventually bound to crash into one of the border-occupying spots. It seems obvious then, for Zolyx to travel into the empty arena – but unfortunately it's not that simple. Zolyx leaves a yellow line behind him wherever he goes, and if a spot crashes into the line Zolyx loses one of his five lives. Further still, once Zolyx starts to create a line he can't stop, as doing so means death.

There is some good news however. When Zolyx gets back to the arena perimeter the area enclosed is filled in blue – allowing Zolyx to move anywhere within. Further intrusions into the renegade spot space, and successful retreats to safety, result in enemy territory slowly being filled in, and more coming under control of Zolyx.

Sometimes a pair of spots may be split. In this case neither area is filled – and consequently Zolyx has to eat away at both areas to reduce the spot's superiority.

Our spotty hero has one trick up his sleeve. When an enemy threatens either himself or his yellow line, a quick press of the fire button reverses the paths of the belligerent pixels. This facility is available once on the first level, twice on the second, and so on ad nauseum . . .

A constantly updating numerical display at the top of the screen shows the percentage of the playing area that Zolyx has claimed. When the heroic spot has reclaimed over 75% of the arena the screen clears to show an empty arena, filled with even more renegade spots, and Zolyx is forced to start to build up his territory again . . .

This is identical to the C64 version, which is surprising as with 121 colours to play with this conversion could at least have featured different colours from level to level. Still, *Zolyx* is immensely playable and at two quid it shouldn't be missed.

OVERALL 90%

ONE MAN AND HIS DROID
Mastertronic, £1.99

Use your robo droid to round up the Ramboids (alien sheep), in this playable collect 'em up. The graphics are large and well detailed and the scrolling is good, though the sound is no more than adequate. Rounding up the sheep is difficult at first, but once control is mastered you can nip around and herd them with relative ease.

OVERALL 78%

PETALS OF DOOM
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

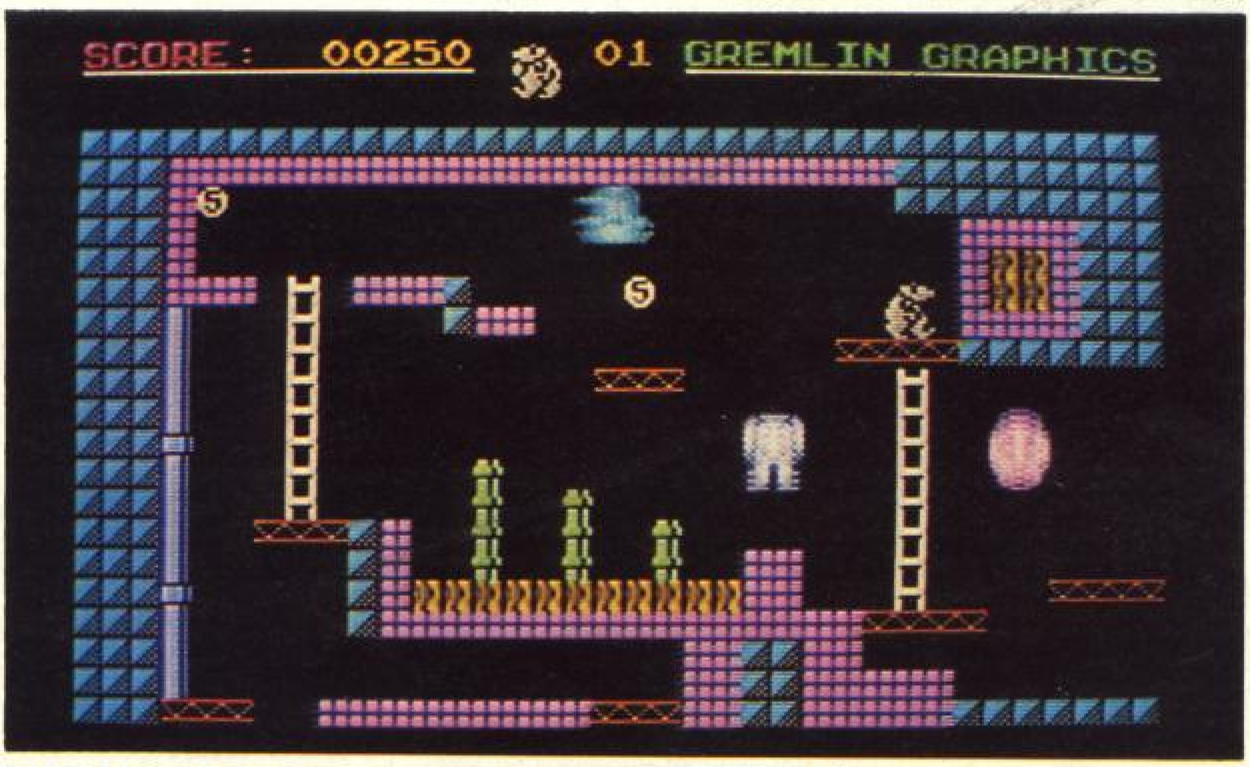
Blast the aliens and protect the plants in this simple, but playable shoot 'em up. The big, bold and colourful graphics are accompanied by sound which is limited to a few simple meaty blasting effects. Fun to play for a while, but the lastability is questionable.

OVERALL 49%

FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING
Elite, £7.95

You take the part of our old mate Frank, as he battles his way through a heap of mangled opponents bodies, in this variant of the arcade game *Punch Out*. It's extremely frustrating at times, but nonetheless playable (more so than the 64 version in many ways).

OVERALL 72%



▲ **Monty gets down to some serious running in the C16 version of MONTY ON THE RUN**

MONTY ON THE RUN
Gremlin Graphics, £7.95

Monty Mole, having escaped from prison, has to make his way to freedom through many varied locations, in this highly playable platform game. Well worth the asking price.

OVERALL 86%

BUBBLE TROUBLE
Players, £1.99

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the bath . . . Take control of a bubble trapped in a water-filled sink and attempt to float to freedom by eating nine small bubbles. Nail brushes, shampoo and other bathroom accessories provide problems. Competent sound and simplistic but colourful graphics adorn a simplistic but fairly addictive concept.

OVERALL 69%

STARBURST
Ariolasoft, £2.99

Even more pretentious than its predecessor, *Hyperforce* – and less addictive.

OVERALL 29%

SUMMER EVENTS
Anco, £7.95

This follow-up to *Winter Events* is due for release very shortly, and promises to be just as impressive, with six new events to entertain and enthral.

WAY OF THE TIGER
Gremlin Graphics, £7.95

Spread over three multi-loaded stages, this is a successful conversion of the mediocre beat 'em up based on the eponymous fighting fantasy book. The first section is Unarmed Combat, set in the desert sands of Orb, the second is Pole Fighting, set on a slippery log, and the third is Samurai Sword Fighting, in which you take on warriors armed with Samurai swords before battling the supreme swordsman – the Master. There are 16 available moves in each section, and the overall feel is good. Definitely a cut above other games of this type on the C16.

OVERALL 71%

PANIC PENGUIN
Midas, £2.99

Guide Percy Penguin around the maze of ice-blocks, avoiding the snow monsters, or squashing them with ice-blocks. The graphics are good, but control is very often sluggish to respond. Still, this *Pengo* derivative is very playable and worth a look at the price.

OVERALL 71%

C16 CLASSICS 2
Gremlin Graphics, £9.95

MONKEY MAGIC
Join Monkey on his quest for the holy scriptures, in this average shoot 'em up. The graphics are okay, but the multi-coloured mountains leave a bit to be desired.

OVERALL 40%

▶

C16

RESCUE FROM ZYLON
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Rescuing a team of geologists from a fate worse than death is the order of the day in this simplistic arcade adventure. A dated game with poor graphics.

OVERALL 33%

MOLECULE MAN
Mastertronic, £1.99

The only 3D isometric maze game available on the C16 sees Molecule Man attempting to collect 16 circuits needed to repair a matter transporter. Difficult to get to grips with, but perserverence proves worthwhile.

OVERALL 61%

THE MAGICIAN'S CURSE
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Your quest is to locate a golden statue, hidden somewhere in a deserted village – there are many objects scattered about the playing area to help you on your way. The graphics are basic, blocky and simplistic, but the gameplay is marginally better.

OVERALL 48%

FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Battle through reams and reams of text, in an attempt to guide your career as a professional footballer through a year of ups and downs. The ultimate aim is to defeat all comers and become *Footballer of the Year*. Initially absorbing, but lacking in the qualities necessary to provide long-term interest.

OVERALL 55%

YIE AR KUNG-FU
Imagine, £6.95

A conversion of Konami's arcade beat 'em up where you attempt to become grand master by defeating eight opponents over two loads. Quite playable, but ultimately too easy to complete. Also found on Imagine's *Konami's Coin Op Hits* compilation, along with *Green Beret*, *Ping Pong* and others.

OVERALL 41%

GUZZLER
Players, £1.99

A strange derivative of *Pac Man* in which you control a fruit-eating mouse. The trick is to be fat or thin at the right places, which proves frustrating but fun.

OVERALL 76%

GUN LAW
Mastertronic, £1.99

A barely competent version of *Commando*. This vertical scroller looks and sounds crude, but plays well enough.

OVERALL 48%

FINGERS MALONE
Mastertronic, £1.99

This colourful platform game puts you in control of Fingers, collecting money and avoiding robotic bank guards. Frustrating, but nonetheless addictive.

OVERALL 74%

STREET OLYMPICS
Mastertronic, £1.99

Compete in four repetitive events in this extremely dull joystick-waggling sports simulation.

OVERALL 14%

VIDEO MEANIES
Mastertronic, £1.99

As a maintenance robot of a large castle, it's your task to turn off the videos which your absent-minded owner has left on. Many deadly creatures patrol the screens, attempting to destroy you before your task is complete. A fun blend of arcade adventure and shoot 'em up action.

OVERALL 78%

MORE ADVENTURES OF
BIG MAC
THE MAD MAINTENANCE MAN
Mastertronic, £1.99

Poor old Mac is lost in the middle of a maze of platforms and is dying of radiation poisoning. Can you help him find and assemble 16 circuits and escape? Looks and sounds a little below standard, but playable if you give it a chance.

OVERALL 69%

TUTTI FRUTTI
Mastertronic, £1.99

Take control of Super Strawberry, collecting cherries and avoiding the deadly attentions of the marauding Acid Apple Gang in this enjoyable *Mr Do* variant.

OVERALL 69%

SQUIRM
Mastertronic, £1.99

Collect the Queen Squirm's eggs before her workers remove them from the maze. Light disappears quickly, so glow worms have to be collected to maintain visibility. Though playable and addictive – the general feel is let down by the below average graphics and sound.

OVERALL 57%

VARMIT
Players, £1.99

A platform and ladders game with little to recommend it. The graphics are okay, but the gameplay is extremely tedious.

OVERALL 26%

TERRA COGNITA
Code Masters, £1.99

Flying along the surface of a barren planet, guide your ship through forcefield beams, avoiding and shooting deadly droid ships. The graphics and gameplay are surprisingly good – especially when you consider the memory limitations.

OVERALL 75%

DROID ONE
Bug Byte, £2.99

A frenetic and playable variation on the *Robotron* theme, with large, colourful graphics, reasonable sound and lots to kill. Incidentally, the smart bombs are called ZZAP!s – how cute.

OVERALL 78%

FUTURE KNIGHT
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

Rescue Princess Amelia from the clutches of the evil Spegbott in this mediocre flick-screen arcade adventure – a poor conversion from the 64, but playable enough.

OVERALL 68%

POWER BALL
Mastertronic, £1.99

Guide a bouncy orange ball through levels of horizontally scrolling platform arrangements, collecting golden chalices and bonuses along the way. Control is tricky at first, but fun when mastered.

OVERALL 76%

MR PUNIVERSE
Mastertronic, £1.99

This follow-up to Big Mac sees Mr Puniverse stuck in maze full of platform-filled locations, with nothing for company but the many obstacles that hinder his search for vitamin pills. A graphical travesty, but great fun.

OVERALL 73%

KANE
Mastertronic, £1.99

Kane's wild western adventure takes place over two screens, incorporating a total of four levels. On the first screen, you have to shoot down birds with a bow and arrow to trade with the indians for peace tokens, with each token earning an extra life. The second screen sees you fighting for your life as a gang of villians attempt to prevent your return. The graphics are quite good, especially the backdrops, although the movement of the main sprite leaves a little to be desired.

OVERALL 48%

ASTRO PLUMBER
Blue Ribbon, £1.99

As a newly-appointed maintenance man, your job is to repair the leaking air pipes which lie in caverns beneath the moon's surface. Unfriendly creatures also inhabit the caverns, and don't take too kindly to your appearance. Dated in every aspect.

OVERALL 20%

PROSPECTOR PETE
Mastertronic, £1.99

Similar in concept to *O'Riley's Mine* on the C64, Pete has to collect coal, diamonds, and other goodies before the mine he inhabits is flooded. Simplistic graphics, sound and action – but the demanding gameplay involves fast reactions and quick thinking.

OVERALL 78%

DANGER ZONE
Code Masters, £1.99

A 20 level horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up which offers nothing new, but is playable nonetheless.
OVERALL 56%

SPEED KING
Mastertronic, £1.99

Similar in many ways to Shaun Southern's other racing game, *Formula One Simulator* – only this time on motorcycles.
OVERALL 56%

KILLAPEDE
Players, £1.99

A fair interpretation of *Centipede*. Nothing new, but it does provide a few hours of tepid blasting action.
OVERALL 53%

BATTLE
Mastertronic, £1.99

A mildly playable strategy game, limited by the C16's memory restrictions.
OVERALL 41%

RUNNER
Firebird, £1.99

Take control of a jet-pack-clad spaceman and collect keys from an arrangement of platforms and ladders, while dodging boulders and mutant pods. Graphically dire, and it plays as bad as it looks.
OVERALL 23%

LEAPER
Bug Byte, £2.99

This is very similar in concept to Imagine's Spectrum classic *Jumpin' Jack*. The aim is to get Leaper to the top of the screen by jumping through gaps in moving platforms, while avoiding nasty creatures. Simplistic, and occasionally frustrating, but highly playable.
OVERALL 62%

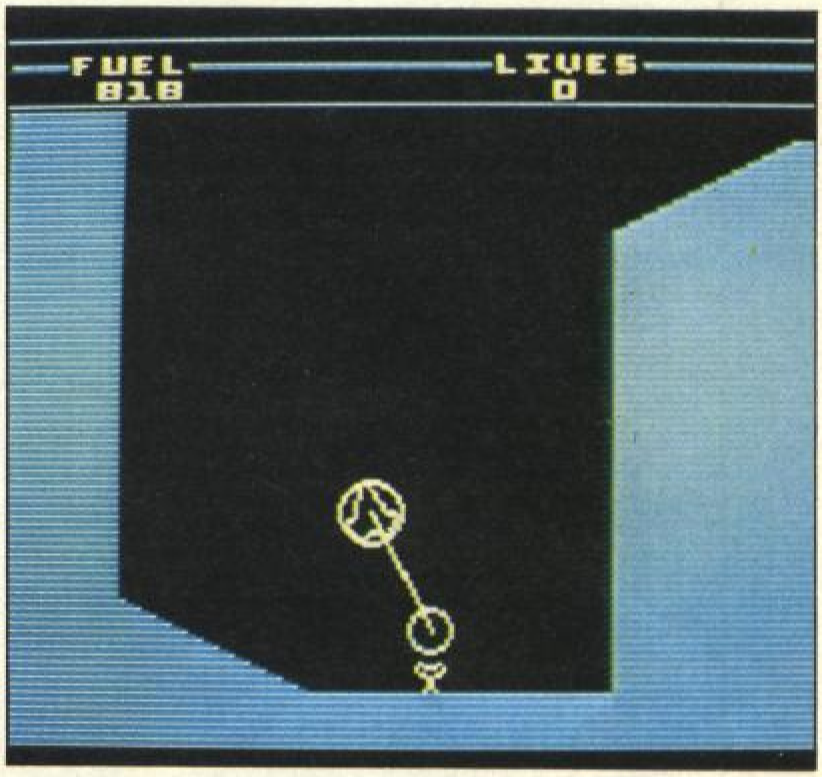
AURIGA
Players, £1.99

Simple shoot 'em up action, with big, colourful graphics, plenty of noise, and lots of enjoyable blasting.
OVERALL 80%

THRUST
Firebird, £1.99

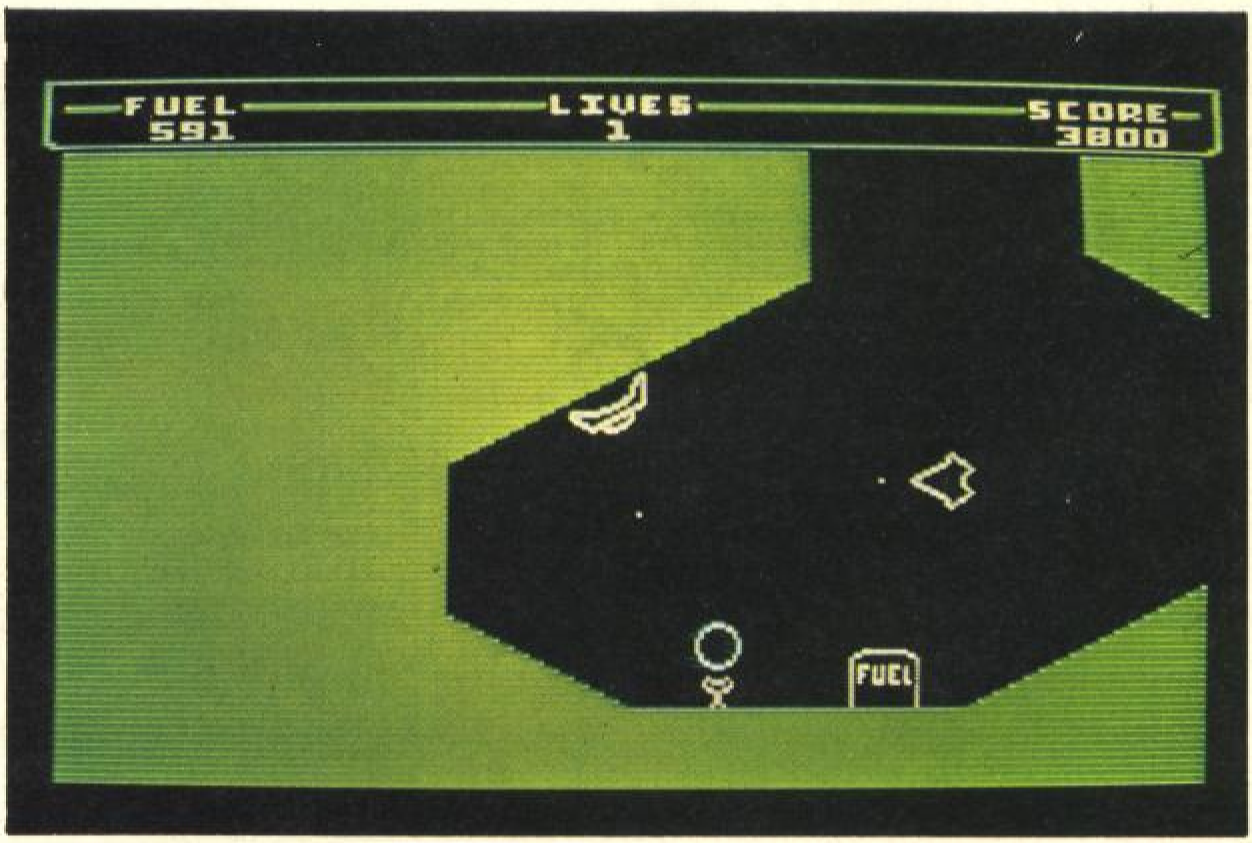
Deep within the abandoned carbon worlds of Gargos is a system of planets containing huge amounts of power – and with three fighters at your disposal, it's up to you to harness it. Each ship is equipped with a cannon, force field and las-leash, and can thrust and rotate through 360 degrees. When flying through space, booting the field into action puts a protective bubble around the craft. Hovering over a fuel dump and letting the force flow pulls fuel into your tanks, and activating the shield whilst hovering over the power pod (a small round object on a pedestal) instantly connects the las-leash to the middle of the pod.

A representation of your ship is constantly displayed in the middle of the scanner, and as the ship moves off towards the boundary of the view, more planetary surface appears. To complete a mission perfectly, both power pod and generator have to be destroyed. If the generator is destroyed, only ten seconds are given to vacate before the planet explodes. Fly straight up and after a couple of seconds a warp takes you to the next level.



Your job progressively gets harder and harder, with the six worlds repeating after completion. The first extra hazard encountered on the seventh sheet is reverse gravity, whereas the 15th sheet presents a totally invisible landscape. This is a competent conversion from the original – the screen flickers quite badly at times, but this doesn't detract from *Thrust*'s immense playability.
OVERALL 88%

THRUST – just as playable as the 64 version



VIDEO POKER
Entertainment USA, £2.99

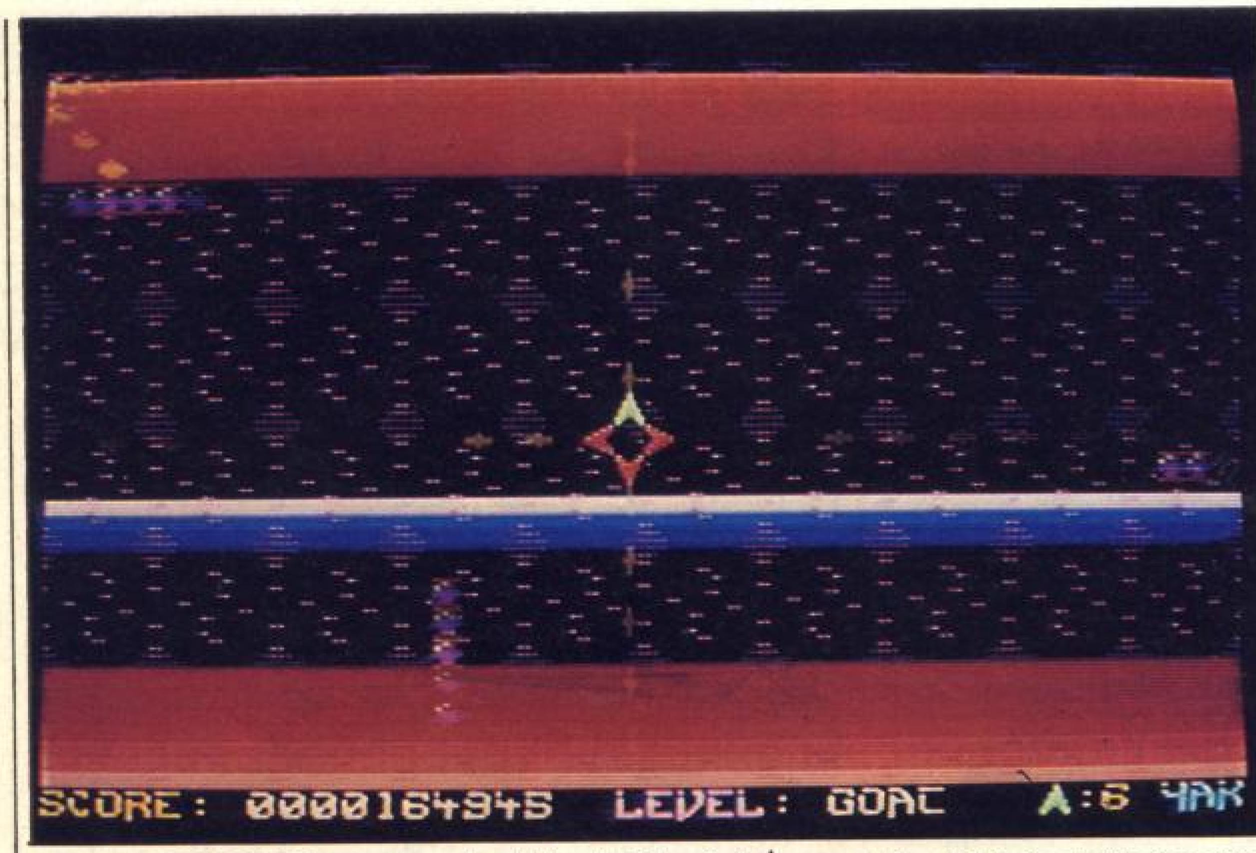
A simulation of a Las Vegas video poker machine which provides fun for a couple of hours, but like most gambling simulations the novelty wears off rather quickly.
OVERALL 23%

ACE
Cascade, £7.95

A cut-down version of the 64 original, but still very playable. More of a shoot 'em up than a flight simulation, with reasonably effective graphics and a fair share of action.
OVERALL 78%

FORMULA ONE SIMULATOR
Mastertronic, £1.99

Though hardly realistic, Shaun Southern's racing game is the best available for the C16.
OVERALL 70%



Jeff Minter's VOIDRUNNER – even more playable than the 64 version! ▲

VOIDRUNNER/HELLGATE
Llamasoft/Ariolasoft

The Droid Wars have come to a head in this final conflict between man and machine. Five fleets of Voidrunners have been sent out to destroy the Droid forces before they can attack the Earth with their deadly missiles.

The action takes place on a single screen. Four tightly packed Voidrunner craft sit in the middle and can be moved anywhere within its borders. The formation of the craft varies from level to level – sometimes they're linked to form a star, either upwards, downwards, diagonally or to one side. This can prove confusing and disorientating at times, but never frustrating to the point of revulsion.

Swarms of Droid craft appear from all sides of the screen and have to be blasted before they or their missiles hit any member the Voidrunner fleet. The result of a direct hit is the destruction of the entire fleet, and play switches to one of the four backup fleets.

The majority of the enemy craft are despatched with a single blast of laser fire, although some require several shots before becoming vulnerable. If enough droids are destroyed the fleet progresses to the next, more difficult screen.

There's a bonus game on the 'B' side of the cassette – *Hellgate*, a classic VIC 20 blaster. Sadly, however, the playability of the original isn't present – but it's *Voidrunner* that makes this package worthwhile, so don't miss it.

OVERALL 92%

SPIKY HAROLD
Firebird, £1.99

Harold's been getting a bit sleepy of late, and so he's decided it's time to hibernate. But a whole winter is a long time to go without any grub, so he goes in search of apples. Spiky Harold is guided through a labyrinth of chambers residing under his hedge, hopping from platform to platform and avoiding the denizens. But time is short (and life is cruel) – Spiky has only 24 hours in which to collect his provisions – after this the winter frost sets in and he perishes. Though *Spiky Harold* features nothing new in the way of platform action, it represents a worthy purchase for fans of this genre.

OVERALL 81%

KUNG-FU KID
Gremlin Graphics, £6.95

A difficult, frustrating and simplified version of *Kung Fu Master*. Small and boring graphics complement the tedious gameplay.

OVERALL 37%

JAIL BREAK
Bug Byte £2.99

Nothing to do with the Konami arcade game of the same name – this is in fact a crude version of *Breakout* which lacks decent graphics, sound and any addictive quality.

OVERALL 8%

SHARK
Firebird, £1.99

Harpooning a multitude of Great Whites and avoiding Jellyfish and Squids provides hours of slightly off-beat fun. Unfortunately, the precision necessary to kill the sharks makes the going a little too tough in places.

OVERALL 64%

SKYHAWK
Bug Byte, £2.99

This playable shoot 'em up (converted from the VIC 20), casts you as an airplane pilot with a city to defend from enemy fighter planes. The graphics are simple, and the horizontal scrolling is jerky, but otherwise *Sky Hawk* is competent.

OVERALL 60%

HARVEY HEADBANGER
Firebird, £1.99

Hamish Highball and Harvey Headbanger are two of the jolliest rivals ever seen. The rotund pair spend their time consuming vast quantities of potent cocktails, and once they're drunk enough they scrap – 'just for fun'. Off to the local park they wobble to do battle on the climbing frame, banging off walls and doors as they go.

As Hamish and Harvey move around the frame network the squares change colour; Harvey turns red squares blue and Hamish turns blue squares red. To win a scrap, one of the drunkards must completely surround the other with his trail.

The twosome battle it out until one of them has been trapped ten times and the other is declared the winner.

Harvey Headbanger is another competent conversion, which retains the playability of its 64 counterpart.

OVERALL 85%

WIMBLEDON
Gremlin Graphics, £7.95

An uninspiring lawn tennis simulation for one or two players, as viewed from above. Many options, but not much playability.

OVERALL 35%

BOMB JACK
Elite, £6.95

A crude interpretation of the classic arcade game, with an equally poor and slow loader.

OVERALL 43%

STORM
Mastertronic, £1.99

A flick-screen maze game with similarities to *Gauntlet*. The graphics are large but murky, the sound is sparse, and the control is awkward – but there is some fun to be had with perseverence.

OVERALL 54%

PIN POINT
Anco, £7.95

A sort of cut-down version of *Spindizzy*, only a lot harder and not as playable. The fun-factor improves with perseverence – but not a great deal.

OVERALL 68%

SPECTIPEDE
Mastertronic, £1.99

More Minter-inspired shoot 'em up, this time with similarities to *Matrix*. Not much to look at, and occasionally repetitive, but addictive enough to merit a purchase.

OVERALL 81%

VEGAS JACKPOT
Mastertronic, £1.99

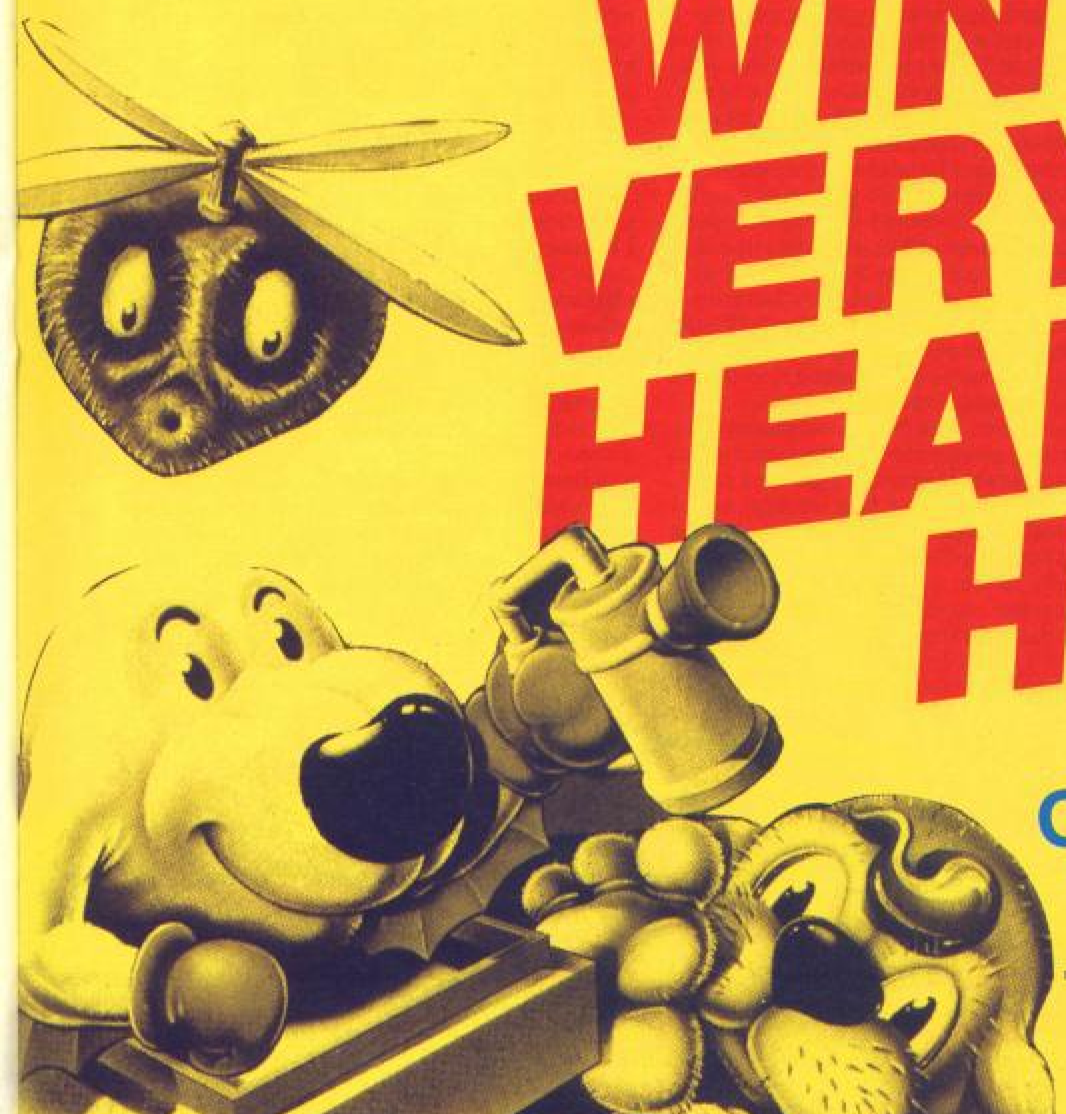
A tedious fruit machine simulation which offers little playability or lasting enjoyment.

OVERALL 20%

ZZAP! COMP

WIN YOUR VERY OWN HEAD AND HEELS!

WITH 50 COPIES OF THE GAME FOR THE RUNNERS-UP



The first Gold Medal of 1987 has finally arrived in the shape of the superlative-laden Ocean release, **Head Over Heels**.

In a wave of enthusiasm, Ocean have agreed to give away a custom-made cuddly **Head Over Heels** toy, made specially to commemorate the game. The winner of our competition will receive the toy, together with a copy of the game, and 50 runners-up will just have to make do with copies of the best game to appear so far this year.

To win this great prize, all you have to do is find and mark 16 words associated with the game in the square below. All the names and characters are mentioned in the review on page 14, so you'll just have to go back and read it properly won't you?

Entries can be cut from these hallowed pages, and we'll also accept photostats or hand-written entries (sorry, but foot-written entries are right out). Send your entry (and an attached list of the words found if possible) to . . .

ZZAP! Head Over Heels Competition, ZZAP! 64 Magazine, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.

Entries should arrive no later than the 10th of September, 1987 – or we'll send the boys round . . .

H	E	A	N	H	O	O	T	E	R	D	P
E	E	X	S	O	V	E	S	T	E	L	Y
G	L	B	A	N	E	N	N	S	I	R	L
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P	R	L	A	O	Q	R	E	D	C	W	E
T	W	A	R	L	S	V	B	L	A	K	I
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M	U	A	S	V	N	F	C	E	A	B	U
O	G	R	W	O	S	E	K	W	T	Z	P
D	H	Q	B	Z	D	M	T	F	I	S	H
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R	T	I	B	B	A	R	T	Q	N	E	H
F	S	Z	Z	A	P	E	H	E	A	D	P

Now complete the following tie-breaker sentence in no more than 15 words . . .

My house deserves its very own Head and Heels because:

....

....

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

PHONE ....

When the bottom drops out of your world (or the world drops out of your bottom), remember the words of Saint Samantha, the patron saint of schoolchildren . . . 'Oh Lord, make me pliant in Thine eyes, for what is today proud and uplifted shall tomorrow droop like spaniel's ears.'

And so I find myself abandoned on Kashdispensa, Earth's grim residue. I am trying to look on the bright side. I am failing. Life can be grand when you fall modem-over-interface in love with an Oli Frey illustration. But all logic submits to passion when the illustration turns out to be none other than Tamara Knight. When Tamara picks me out of a slice of human bacon, makes her feelings known with the word 'Pooh!' and flicks me into the gutter, there is only one thing left to do – pray. I have never asked you for any favours, have I? I have not once demanded recompense for the enormous pleasure and stimulation that you have enjoyed from these monthly communications – I haven't even asked you to understand the plot. So just this once, I beg you to help me. It doesn't matter who, what, where or when you are, perhaps I can win Tamara back if enough of you pray. This is how we'll do it. Deep in my memory banks I have located one of the oldest prayers known to machine (older even than Saint Samantha's), and I want you to read it out – *very loud*. Are you ready? Here we go.

THE LARD SPRAYER . . .

'How far The Who?' Martin Evans hullooed behind Mame. 'Biking? Dumb con! Thighs will bleed on unearthed acidic sin, Evans! Give us Thursday how deliberate and forklifter's hire truss passes as wee: forklift them Who! Truss puss again!' Strauss, and leaders not into Tin Patents, buttered liverwurst from Nevil, for diners dunking damp flea powder. And thick Gloria? 'Far heavier and heavier . . . Amen.'

Oh, thank you! How can I ever repay you? I can't. I won't. Anyway, it hasn't worked, so you can go straight back to the previous paragraph and read it out again, and don't any of you dare continue until you've done it. Ha! caught you! You're deliberately ignoring my instructions and reading on. Well listen mate, we'll never get Episode Eight off the ground unless you play your part. Besides, this is the nearest that I can get to Interactive Entertainment, so go on back to the bit where it says 'The Lard Sprayer', and may you stay forever young.

"I'll spend the rest of my life here in the gutter, leaking radiation and making anagrams out of the words 'Silk Cut' . . . "

Hello? Okay that's enough. Forget it. Hello? Are you still there? Quite frankly I don't know why you are bothering to play along – I've given up. I'll spend the rest of my life here in the gutter, leaking radiation and making anagrams out of the words 'Silk Cut.' The power of prayer seems to have failed. Thanks anyway. I think all this love garbage has addled my logic circuits. I keep imagining that I hear Tamara calling my name. There she goes again. I'll just have to fax the face, I am going insane. 'ult sick.' Toys in the attic. 'cus kilt.' Out to lunch. 'slut cik.' Stark raving mad. 'suck . . . 'TAMARA!

Tamara is here! She's picking me up and holding me gently between her perfect thumb and forefinger! She's rubbing me clean! Tamara . . . why have you come back to me? 'Oh Louse', she breathes, 'please forgive me. I didn't know how much we'd been through together, until I read . . . these.' She is waving some ancient magazines in front of me. 'Look Louse, it's all in here, all your reports to readers of ZZAP! 64. I found them in a Time Capsule dated 1987, along with this copy of 'The Skye Boat Song' by Roger Whiticker and Des O'Connor and this little black box. I don't think much of your prose style, it's been completely overwritten if you ask me. But now I know how much we've been through together, all I want is to transform you from a miniature bomb into a handsome prince with a smallish moustache and some leisureware.'

EPISODE 8

By Mel Croucher

My little atomic heart is beating like a . . . like a . . . well it's completely silent as a matter of fact, but I feel as happy as Clement Chambers with a yo-yo. 'Oh Louse! If only we weren't slaves to the Macdonald Intergalactic Hamburger and Teleporter Corporation! If only we could go back to Astar and have all our dreams come true! If only I could stop saying 'if only . . . ' But Tamara, can't you understand? Everything has changed. We *are* free! You were put under the control of Louse #007, who is at this very moment engaged in a passionate affair with a fruit machine. I was programmed to look after that gruesome little moron Duane Pipe, and all that's left of him is 12 metres of black pudding and a dancing kidney. As far as Macdonalds is concerned, I'm dead and you're a set of spinning cherries.

Even as I speak, #007 and his lover consummate their relationship by going critical. As they vapourise skywards, I can just hear them singing a little love anthem together, 'here we glow, here we glow, here we glow . . . ' Wow! What a great way to die. And what a great way to erase Tamara from Macdonalds' files. Nothing can stop us now, all we have to do is stroll to the teleporter, set the coordinates for Astar, make a wish without cocking up the syntax, and it's handsome time! Let's not waste another moment. Take me to the booth, before anything can go . . . hngk!?

The teleporter vanishes. Air rushes in to fill its vacuum with the sound of . . . ahhh . . . air filling a vacuum I suppose! 'Louse?' Tamara is about to burst into tears . . . I beat her to it. Macdonalds' monitoring system has obviously logged the termination of our little expedition and recalled its gateway to the universe. We are stuck yet again on a hostile planet, and expected to survive in a world inhabited only by slot machines.

Hello again. Tamara has just polished off the last slice of processed Duane, and we are discussing cholesterol poisoning. Suddenly she changes the subject. 'You know, ever since I was a little test tube, I've always dreamed of running away and joining the circus', she confides. 'Putting my head inside elephant's trunks, throwing buckets of tigers over the red-nosed clone, doing tricks on the flying cannonball . . . wouldn't it be romantic Louse?' Yes, it would. I could be the Strong Man, with a smallish moustache and some leopardskin leisureware.

We scan the heavens seeking inspiration . . . it doesn't take long (after all, I must pander to your well-documented lack of concentration). Ooh look! Up there! What is it? Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it a computer game based on a superhero? No – it's none of these things. I can make out some detail on this peculiar flying craft, lazily floating down like some circus tent in the sky. It's a circus tent, lazily floating down like some peculiar craft, bedecked with flags



and bunting, a ragged band booming out jolly music, horribly drawn posters sticking themselves to every surface, lights flashing on and off around the canvas portals, and the magical scent of animal excrement causing Tamara to say . . . 'Pooh!'

"Please don't leave me there on the planet Kashdispensa, I've run out of people to eat . . . "

Hurrah, the circus has come to town! And off we go, merrily tripping towards the Big Top, to start our new life together. 'Roll up! Roll up!' beams the man in the top hat and stilts. 'No thanks,' says Tamara, 'I don't smoke.' 'Well naff off then, Shorty!' snarls the Red-nosed Clone, who is obviously destined to become our enemy later on in the story. 'Please Sir', lisps Tamara, turning on her most appealing look, 'Please Sir, I want to join the circus. Please let me come with you and travel the galaxy. I promise to work hard, and I don't want any money. Just somewhere to lay my head and wash my tutu. Only please don't leave me here on the planet Kashdispensa, I've run out of people to eat . . . ' The beaming man climbs off his stilts and bends down to squint at Tamara, saying, 'What do you mean, Kashdispensa? Isn't this the planet Yuppy in the Kleeshay System?' Her lovely eyes widen as she acts her most vulnerable by sticking her thumb in her mouth and standing very close to him while pleading, 'Oh no thir, thith ith Kathdithpentha. Ple-eath, ple-e-eath can I come with you?' 'Naff off Shorty!' yells the Ringmaster, 'Oi! Tell the navigation pigeon that he's made a mess of the route again. Let's get out of here before the mammoths get restless.'

What an ignorant, heartless brute. The big top begins to rise before our very eyes, and there is nothing we can do to save ourselves – except grab hold of the knotted rope that a little red dog in the funny collar is lowering to us. Thank you little red dog, what's your name? 'Ralph! Ralph!' barks the little red dog, and Tamara solemnly shakes its paw, saying, 'Pleased to meet you, Ralph-Ralph. What's that funny collar you're wearing around your little red neck?' And the dog looks her straight in the eye, and says, 'Ruff!' So it's up, up and away, off into the wide blue yonder, bound for our first performance on Yuppy, rescued and safe. I wonder what wonderful act Tamara will perform. I do hope it's not the tightrope. I hate executions . . .

It is now several hours later. Unfortunately, Tamara has been discovered and reported as a stowaway. Fortunately, we haven't been voided into space and she's been given her heart's desire – a job in the circus. Unfortunately, her function is to muck out the mammoths. Ralph-Ralph, the little red talking dog, has become our friend. After all, it's about time we introduced a new character to the plot, and I doubt if I can be upstaged by a monosyllabic mutt.

"Every half hour, Tamara has to feed the killer doormice on owls carefully grown from a packet of birdseed . . . "

Our heroine has a few other duties too. Each half hour she must feed the killer doormice on owls carefully grown from a packet of birdseed, and sort out the racial tension between the South Afrikkan Zebras. The latter problem is a bit of a toughie. It seems that the white zebras with black stripes (comprising 15% of the population and occupying the cleanest 75% of the cage) are terrorising the black zebras with white stripes (85% of the population occupying 25% of the filthiest space). This has been going on for 150 years, but nobody has bothered to stop it – and why should they as long as the audience pays its money? Naturally Tamara's perfect simplicity sorted it out immediately. She played the Roger Whiticker and Des O'Connor version of 'The Skye Boat Song' to the opressors until they surrendered in a grovelling heap (about half way through the first verse).

After tea, Ralph-Ralph introduces us to some of his animal friends. There is a wombat named 'Wilf!', some sweet little rhino twins called 'Rolf!' and 'Ruth!', 'Luther!' the legless leopard, and a Venusian gerbil who goes by the name of 'Garth!' Hmm . . . I think I'll have a go at conversation, and see just how smart this dog really is. I tune my telepathic frequencies to the canine wavelength and ask it, 'Tell me Ralph-Ralph, what's it like working for the circus?' Without hesitation, the dog licks Tamara's hand in which I am cradled and says, clear as a bell, 'Rough!'

Now those of you with highly developed memories may remember that when Tamara discovered those ancient copies of the very magazine that you are reading right now, along with the Roger Whiticker/Des O'Connor weapon, she also pocketed a little black box. Well I've been having a little tinker with this device, and its function is very interesting indeed. It seems to be some form of population pacifier, a type of 'brain wave goodbyer' as used by the authorities around about the time when the capsule was buried in Ancient Britain. Simply by turning a little knob, the circuitry sends out alpha-wave interference in ever-increasing circles, making anyone within range feel progressively apathetic, despondent, melancholy, heartbroken and suicidal. Naturally, I'm crammed full of similar miniaturised gismos myself, and I'm taking a lot of pleasure in rearranging the guts of this despicable piece of hardware for the benefit of humanity in general (and Tamara in particular). All I have to do is to reverse the wave of patterns, and she will be the happiest most compliant companion a neutron bomb could wish for.

"You've baggered up my zebras, you interfering little buggage!"

Watch out, Tamara! Here comes the vindictive Red-nosed Clone, and I think he's after some mischief making. It's probably the way he's holding that battle-axe above his head and screaming, 'You've baggered up my zebras, you interfering little buggage!' 'What shall I do, Louse?!' yelps the poor girl, 'There's nowhere to run to!' 'Roof!' advises Ralph-Ralph The Talking Dog, but it's too late. Red-nose has us cornered. Now, I'm well aware of the fact that new technology should be thoroughly tested before it's used on a live specimen, but I hope that you'll forgive me if I make an exception. As Red-nose's scream of rage mingles with Tamara's scream of terror, I throw myself between the contact breakers of the little black box's failsafe.

There is an instant of freeze frame horror, then Red-nose drops the axe. Next he drops his jaw. Now he drops his guard. Finally, a little titter escapes him. Is the black box laying the good vibrations upon us, dear reader? I do believe that it is. A perfect pair of little titters escapes Tamara and even I feel somewhat giggly. Red-nose is smiling broadly now, in fact he's laughing hysterically. Tamahahara joins in. Wow! I feeheheel good! Look at old Red-nose, clutching his gut, convulsed in helpless laughter. Ha! Hahahaha! HAHAHA! Whoops, 'scuse me. I can't seem to controhohol myself. I feel hahahappy! Old Red-nose is laughing his guts up, hehehere they come! Now hehehe's laughing his head off! There it goes, blood all over the place. HAHAHAHA!!!!!! The funniest thing of all is that I hahahahahaven't got a clue how to turn this thing off . . . HAHAHAHAHAHAHAH!!!!!!! this next one will kill you, folks . . . we're gohohohoing to die laughing . . .
AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAAAAAAAAR-RRGH . . .

You can't help smiling when you bite off your own lips.

To be continued . . .



IT'S JUST NOT CRICKET

ZZAP! COMP

WIN A VIP DAY OUT AT A TEST MATCH



NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

PHONE ....

POSTCODE

PALACE SOFTWARE

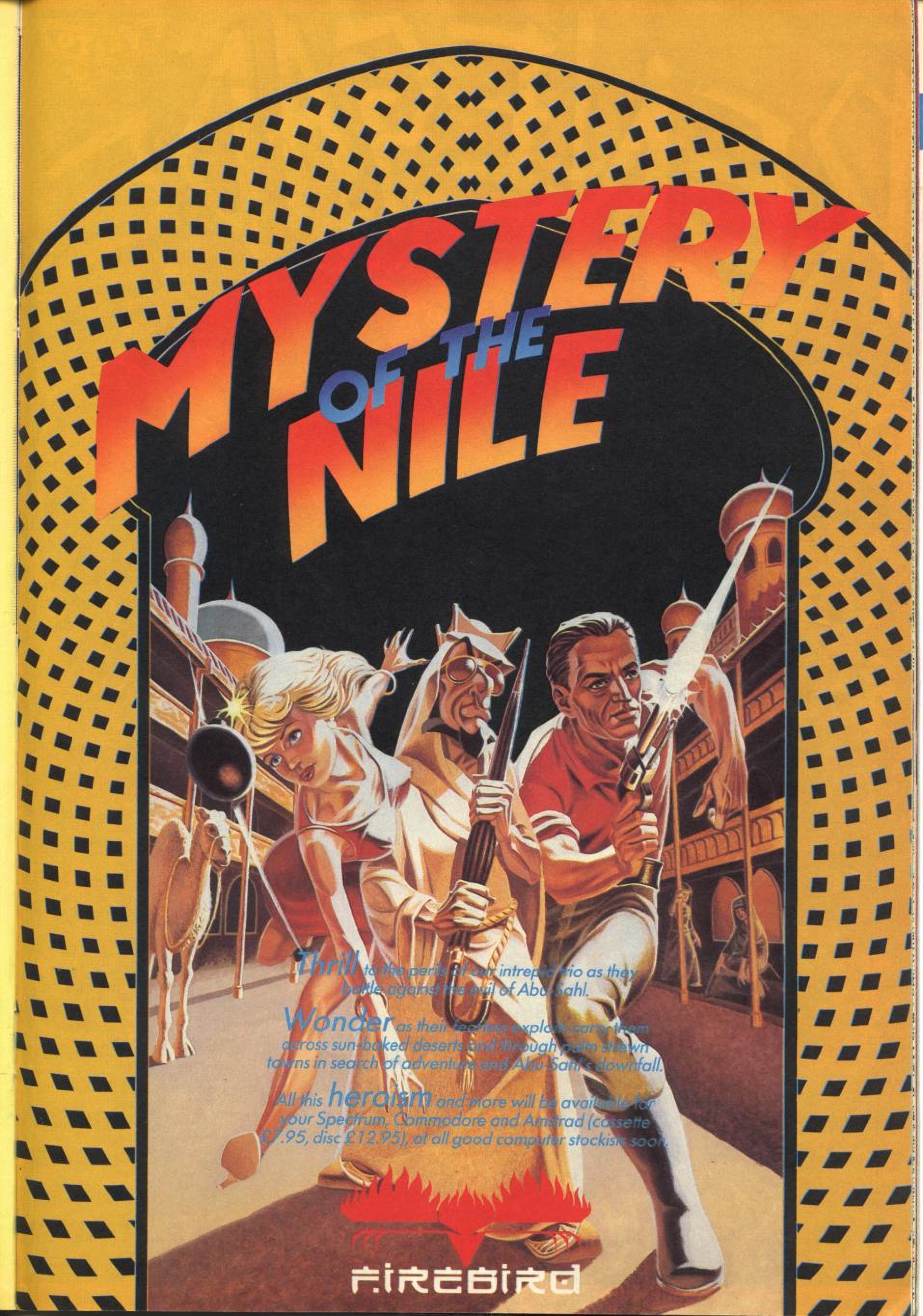
What ho! Chaps! I've just been takin' a gander at that ripping new game thingy *Stifflip and Co*, which is reviewed somewhere in this issue. Apparently, it was written by **Rupert Bowater** and **Paul Norris**, the two bods responsible for those other binary masterpieces, *Zoids* and the *Forth Protocol*.

Stifflip and Co stars a quartet of eccentric Englishmen (and women) from the old school. Headed by the fearless Sebastian Stifflip, the gang of four pit their wits against the evil Count Chameleon (a cad without a doubt) and his terrifying Rubbertronic Ray – definitely not cricket. And speaking of which, to celebrate the release of their new game, those spiffing chaps from the Palace Software stable are dishing out two tickets to see the bi-centenary Test match between England and the Rest of the World on Saturday the 22nd of August. The lucky winner and a friend will get VIP treatment for the day (as is the prerogative of a true English gent) at what promises to be a super day out.

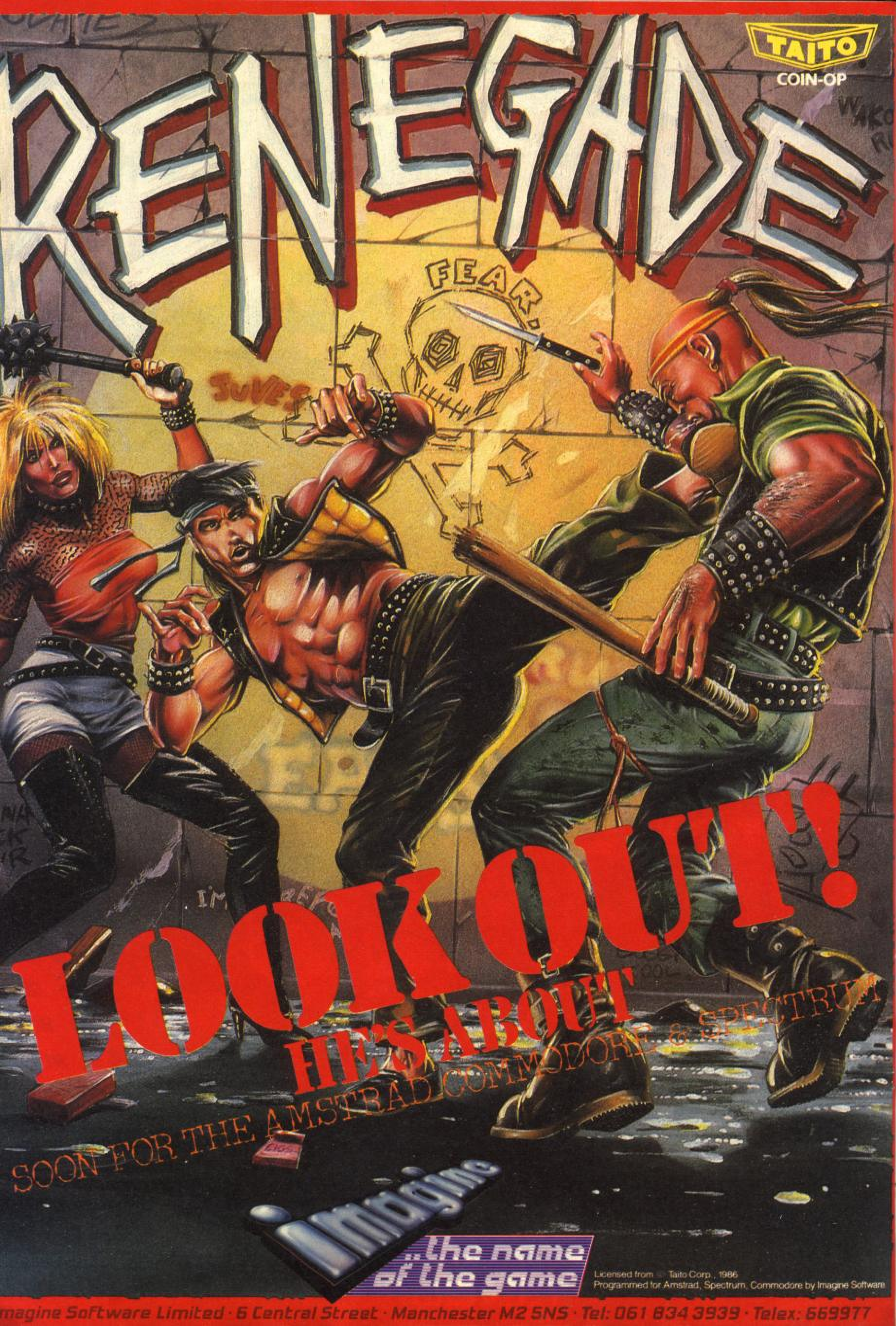
To win the day of a lifetime watching the world's best cricketers, all you have to do is locate and study the picture of Stifflip and team getting in a bit of batting practice on this very page. When you are sure that you've taken in every inch of detail, mark on the picture the point where you think the centre of the ball is with a cross. Be careful, though, as you're only allowed one attempt per entry. When you think you've successfully pinpointed the leather, send off your jolly old entry entry to: **ZZAP! Stifflipped comp, ZZAP! 64 Magazine, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB**.

Entries should arrive no later than the 10th of August, 1987. The winning entry will be the one with its cross on, or nearest to the one on the original artwork. There are also 20 runners-up prizes of copies of the game for the poor wallahs that came pretty damn close, too. Best of British chaps, Cheerio!

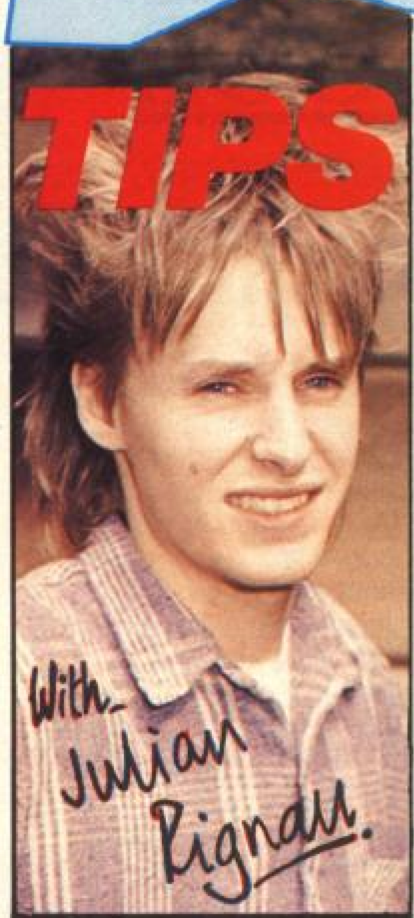
Don't forget to include a telephone number with your entry, as the winner will be notified by phone on the evening of August 10th.



MYSTERY OF THE NILE
Thrill to the perils of our intrepid trio as they battle against the evil of Abu-Sahl.
Wonder as their fearless exploits carry them across sun-baked deserts and through palm strewn towns in search of adventure and Abu-Sahl's downfall.
All this heroism and more will be available for your Spectrum, Commodore and Amstrad (cassette £7.95, disc £12.95), at all good computer stockists soon.
FIREBIRD



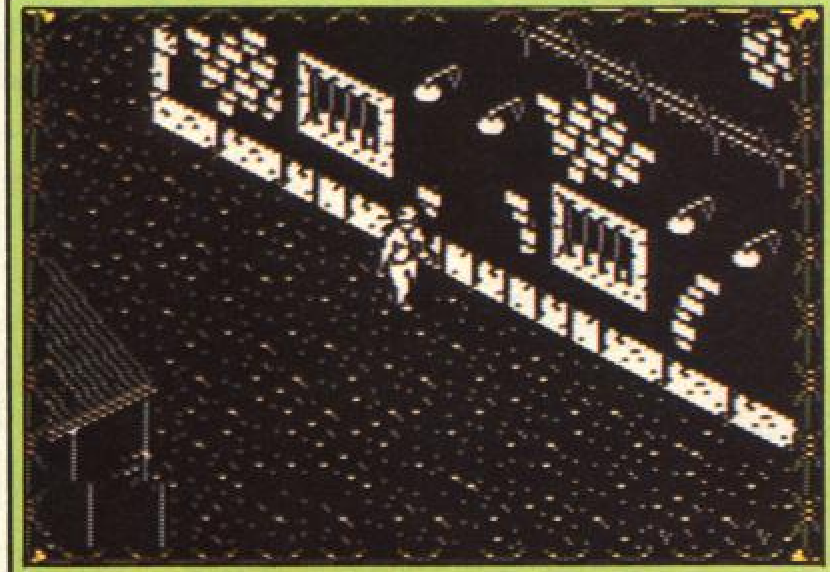
TAITO
COIN-OP
RENEGADE
FEAR
LOOK OUT!
HE'S ABOUT
SOON FOR THE AMSTRAD, COMMODORE & SPECTRUM
imagine
...the name of the game
Licensed from © Taito Corp., 1986
Programmed for Amstrad, Spectrum, Commodore by Imagine Software
Imagine Software Limited · 6 Central Street · Manchester M2 5NS · Tel: 061 834 3939 · Telex: 669977



I can't say I was particularly impressed with June's Commodore Show – what happened to the crowds of last year? And where were all the software producers? There was hardly anything to do, and the only things on display were Amiga games – has everyone forgotten the good old 64? Oh well, the PCW show should be a completely different kettle of fish. We'll have an absolutely hu-u-ge stand there, and you're all welcome to come and have a chat with me, or any other member of the team.

Anyway, that's all in the future. As for now, make the best use of this lot . . .

THE GREAT ESCAPE (Ocean)



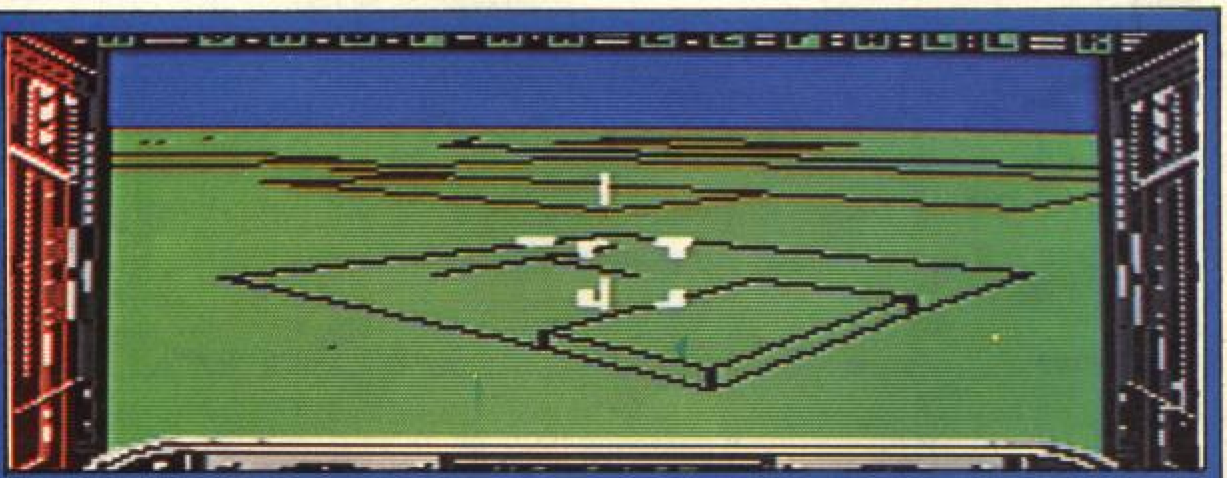
Congratulations to Allan Kelly **of Wallsend, Tyne and Wear – he's managed to escape from Ocean's binary POW camp! And by way of celebration, he's decided to reveal his secret escape plans and enable all you other prisoners of war to make that bid for freedom. By the way, don't forget last issue's *Great Escape* map – it's invaluable . . .**

Get KEY ONE, open the relevant door and get the GUARD'S UNIFORM. Wear the uniform on your way out, and leave the key where you found it. Get the RED CROSS PARCEL, open it and get the MONEY BAG. Put the money somewhere safe (usually the tunnel).

Get KEY TWO and use it to open the relevant door. Put the key in a safe place, get the TOOL KIT and unlock the door to the room housing the SPADE. Take the tool kit back to the safe place, get the spade and take it back to the safe place, then leave the uniform. Get the tool kit and the ID PAPERS.

Leave the tool kit and get the TORCH. Head back to the tunnel and remove the blockage using the spade. Put the spade down and go back to get the ID papers. Use the tunnel again, only this time leave the ID papers at the end of the tunnel near the exercise yard. Follow normal routine in Day Two but get Red Cross parcel – it contains the WIRE-CUTTERS which are essential for your escape.

Follow normal routine on Day Three, but get the Red Cross parcel. On Day Four get the Red Cross parcel (for the COMPASS) and you are now ready to escape. Use the main tunnel and take the compass to the exercise yard. Get the wire-cutters and cut through the wire. Drop the compass. Cut the wire and get the ID papers, then cut the wire again to get out. Drop the wire-cutters, pick up the compass, and run off the screen to escape to safety. Go for it – and do Steve McQueen proud!



GUNSHIP (Microprose)

Yo! All you budding Apache pilots listen to the advice of S Johnson **and** D Murray **of County Durham, and get flying.**

MEDALS

To get a campaign ribbon and air medals for each area, fly the following at volunteer hazardous duty:

SOUTH EAST ASIA: Fly four missions plus four for an air medal.
CENTRAL AMERICA: Fly four mission plus four for an air medal.
MIDDLE EAST: Fly four mission plus four for an air medal.
WESTERN EUROPE: Fly four missions plus four for an air medal.
NB: Purple hearts are only awarded if you land at the base with both missions complete and you are seriously wounded.

FLYING TIPS

If you're on the 'simplified flying' setting it's advisable to fly on one engine to get to your objective, and once in battle engage the other. This is extremely useful if both your objectives are at either end of the battle field, as it saves fuel. If the setting is 'realistic', take off on both engines and shut one down once you're safely in the air.

WEAPONS

Try and spare your cannon rounds by only firing when the object is in range (usually less than a kilometre away). When a Hind attacks and you wish to fire a sidewinder, keep the Hind near the centre of the screen and then fire. Sidewinders are useful as the Hind never seems to jam them. If you wish to fire a FFAR, you must keep the cross hairs in the tads target.

If you are using cannons, wait until the Hind is in distant (1.0 km or under). The target always glows when it's in range.

Hinds in Western Europe nearly always hide behind hills and use pop-up attacks. If this happens you have three choices:
1. Make a dash for the hill and skirt around the bottom of the hill and catch the Hind unawares.
2. Stand your ground and wait for the Hind to make his pop up attack before firing.
3. If there is a hill, go around it and wait for the Hind to approach and then make your attack.

GENERAL TIPS

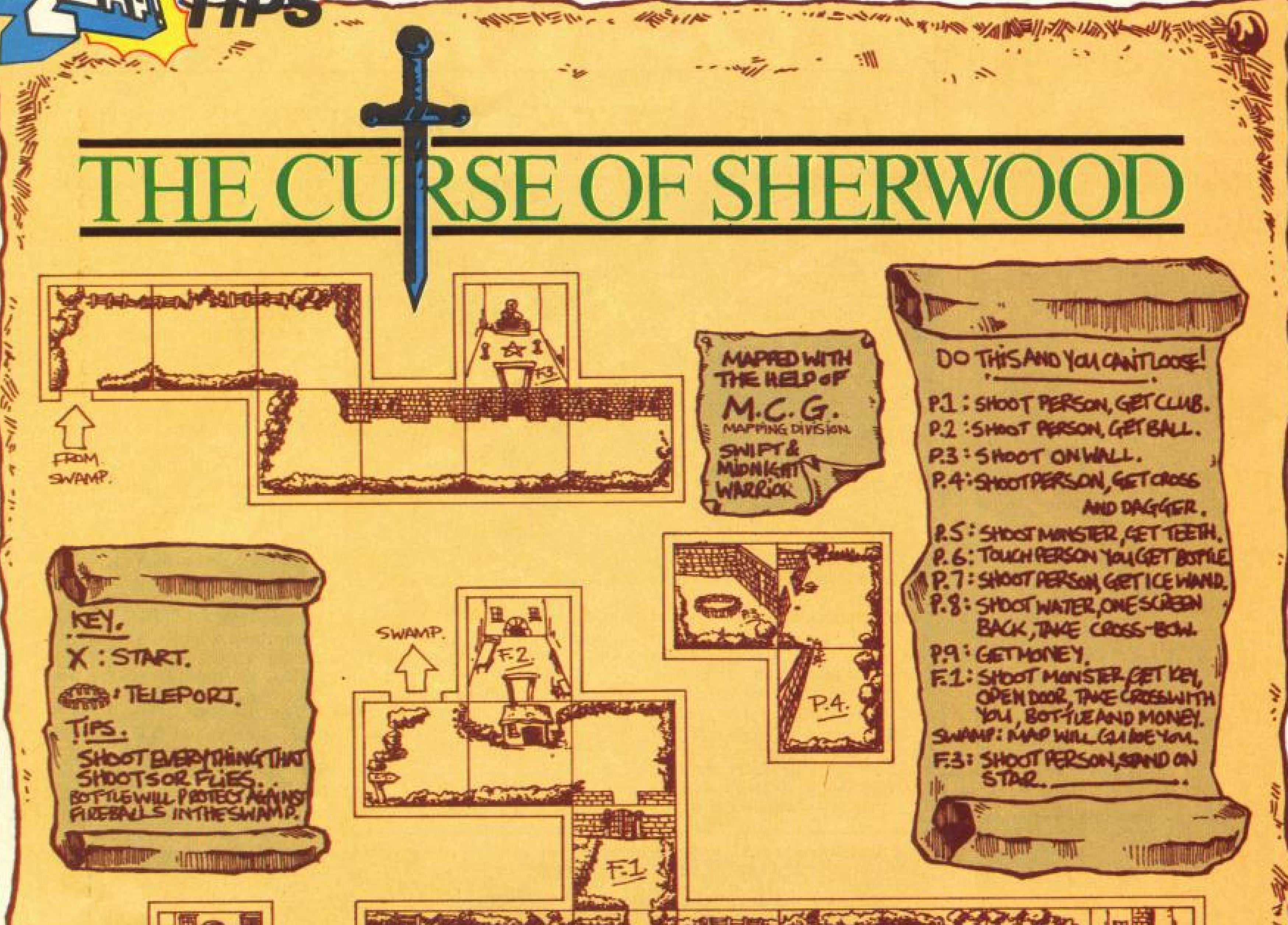
Always stock up with a variety of weapons, but remember that FFARs are useful against both air and ground attacks. If you are flying extreme for the first time, skirt around the hills until you reach your objectives.



I, BALL (Firebird)

Firebird forgot to mention in the instructions that if you press Z and X on the title screen, the speech from the game is played. 'Not very impressive' you might think, but if you push the joystick back and forward while making the computer speak, it slows down or speeds up the voice. O-o-o-oh No!.

THE CURSE OF SHERWOOD



STRIKE FORCE HARRIER (Mirrorsoft)

OK – which one of you budding pilots is having trouble flying this flight simulator? If you have your hand in the air, read the following tips from Mirrorsoft's very own squadron. Using them should help extend flying hours and perhaps achieve the objective.

LANDING SITES

To survive for any length of time, you must look after your landing sites. Firstly, if a tank moves onto a landing site it is destroyed – an explosion signifies this event and a new landing site becomes available at HOME BASE (where Q landing site starts off). Another important thing to remember is that if a tank moves on to HOME BASE, the game ends.

As soon as you're airborne, destroy the four tanks to the east of landing site Q. Move your landing sites every 15 minutes or so.

CALLING UP A LANDING SITE

If you call your ground forces to a new landing site and they don't arrive, it may be because they cannot prepare the ground around you. If you don't get the message 'Over GS' when you call up a landing site, take off again vertically. Pinpoint the landing site again using the HOMER and land. Remember that you must take off vertically as the ground is unprepared.

HILLS

Don't perform steep dives or turns near mountains until you know your limitations as a pilot!

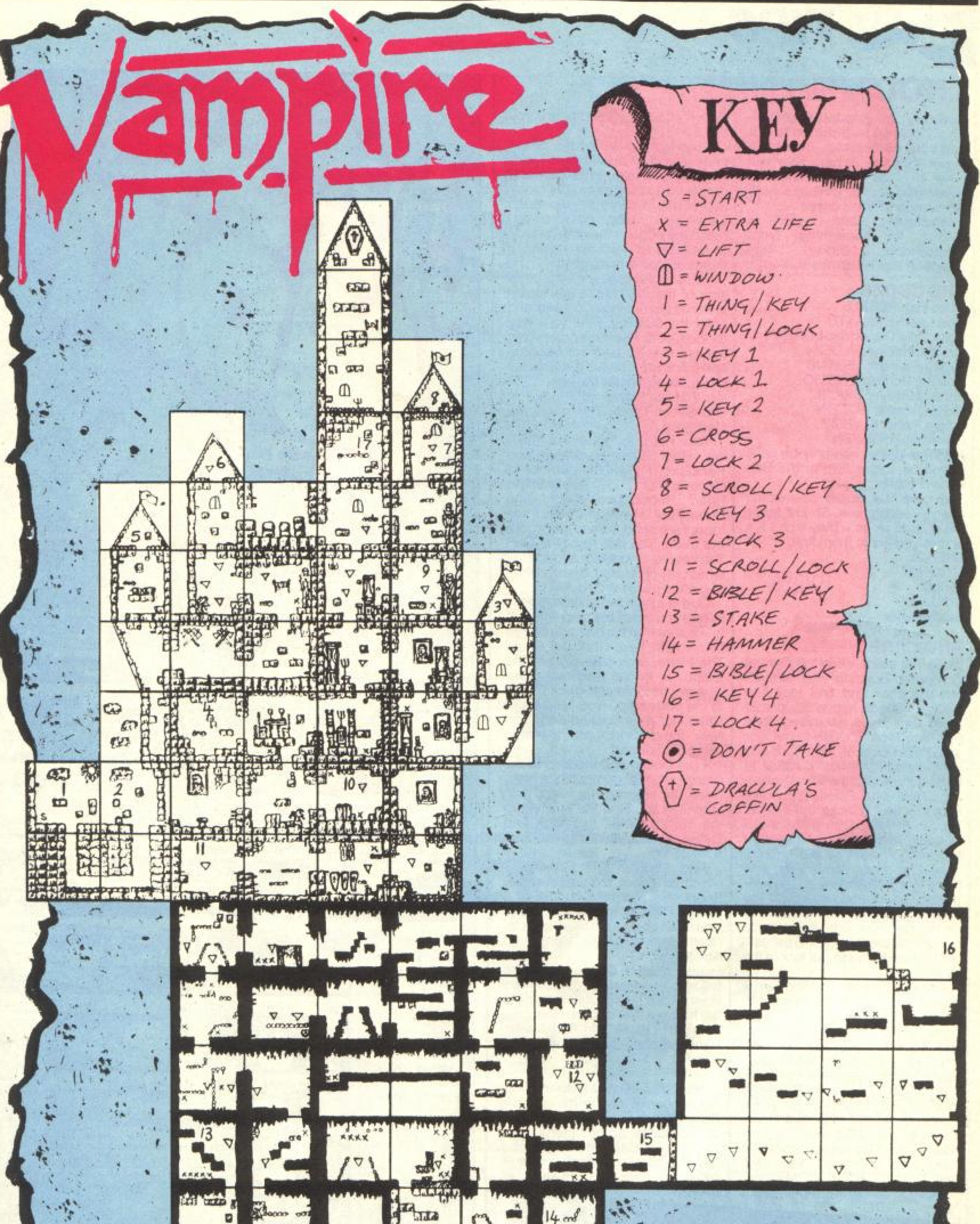
AVOIDING MISSILES

Timing the release of chaff and flares is crucial – they don't have the required effect if they are released too early. If your decoy is unsuccessful the missile alert continues, while a successful decoy is rewarded by silence and a report of your remaining decoys.

If an attacking missile is in front of you, evasive action is more effective than decoys. With a missile approaching from behind it is best not to release the decoy until it overprints the plane on the combat radar. When you see a missile approaching, keep changing direction until the alert stops and the missile is no longer on the combat radar screen. If all else fails, take cover in the clouds!

AIR COMBAT

Enemy planes often hunt in packs of three – but you only have two Sidewinders. These missiles are deadly, so don't waste them on easy targets. Don't engage an enemy squadron unless you have a full complement of Sidewinders. Make your first kill using cannon.


Vampire
KEY
S = START
X = EXTRA LIFE
▽ = LIFT
= WINDOW
1 = THING / KEY
2 = THING / LOCK
3 = KEY 1
4 = LOCK 1
5 = KEY 2
6 = CROSS
7 = LOCK 2
8 = SCROLL / KEY
9 = KEY 3
10 = LOCK 3
11 = SCROLL / LOCK
12 = BIBLE / KEY
13 = STAKE
14 = HAMMER
15 = BIBLE / LOCK
16 = KEY 4
17 = LOCK 4
= DON'T TAKE
= DRACULA'S COFFIN
MCG
MAPPING DIV

CHOLO (Firebird)

Contrary to unpopular belief, *Cholo* isn't so bug-ridden that it can't be completed. Does this mean that the Screen Star will now be considered reinstated . . . or perhaps not? Who knows? Who cares . . .

Whatever, Gary Church **or** Chorch **(or something) from Postcombe, Oxford has supplied this brilliant solution.**

THE CODES

Rizzo Rat: REBELS
Gort Leadie: KLAATU
Koke Cole Dispenser: LOREAN
Igor the Hacker: PLUGIN
Ridley Camera: LEGEND
Dr John Doctor: STETHO
Anneka Flyeye: BRAZIL
Felini Camera: ACTION
Aviata Plane: FLYBOY
Queen Ship: QUEEN
NB: The Queen can only be controlled by Cyber Five in the Science complex.
The next five guard passwords change each game. So just leave the guards alone – they won't fire unless you fire at them first.
FREDDY
MCLEAN
PHILBY
HOLLIS
BLUNT

AND HERE WE GO . . .

Rizzo Rat starts off in the Central Computer Building. Go straight out the door and find Igor The Hacker. Shoot him a couple of times until he is paralysed, then ram him. Type PLUGIN to put Igor under your control. Take Igor into the Central Computer Building to Cyber One and you will find Radarprg. Take it to Rizzo, then take Rizzo to find Anneka the Flyeye. Type in BRAZIL, then take Anneka to Logic Island. Place Anneka on the teleport next to the church. Take Igor down Group Pier, and swop Igor with Anneka on the teleporter. Now take Igor around the edge of the church to the doorway on the opposite side. If you try to cut across the land Igor crashes – but be careful not to put Igor in the river.

Enter the church and find Cyber Two. Take Surveyprg and run it to put two cameras (found in the SE corner of the map) under your control. Take Anneka and Igor and swap them over using the teleporter, so that Igor is on the Pier. Now use Anneka to cross the River and look around for another robot – it moves out to sea in a square until it comes onto land near the harbour. Take Rizzo and shoot the robot until paralysed, then ram him. Type in STETHO to take control of Dr John, the repair robot (which should be used only if you die).

Take Igor on to Bridge Street and move West at full speed. Make sure he is at minimum damage and moving in a straight line. The radiation starts to climb as you reach the edge of the map, but when you reach the edge of the map it starts to drop again – so don't panic if things are looking rough.

You should now be on the other side of the city. Move Igor down towards the Science Complex and enter the building. Find your way to the Cyber Five computer, gain access to it to take ship control and Hack1prg. Leave the Science Complex and enter the only building that isn't pyramid shaped to find Cyber Three. This gives you Hack2prg.

Take Rizzo to Igor in the building. Give Rizzo Hack1prg and Hack2prg. Follow the corridor to discover four robots. Robot One is Rizzo, Robot Two is Igor and Robot Four is Dr John. These three robots are dead, so you can't control them. The last Robot is Gort The Leadie. Shoot him about thirty times until paralysed, then ram him to get the password KLAATU.

Gort is a high radiation robot, so before you cross the map with him make sure that his damage level is below half. Take Gort, get Aviata The Plane, then take Gort to the teleporter in the harbour. Take Queen The Ship and dock it next to the other ship – you will be told when Queen is docked correctly. Now move Gort onto the ship using the teleport.

Take Queen and the ship to the island in the SE corner of the map. Dock the ship on the island and take Gort off. Find the building to the North. Enter this and find Cyber Four, which gives you ATMOSTYE.

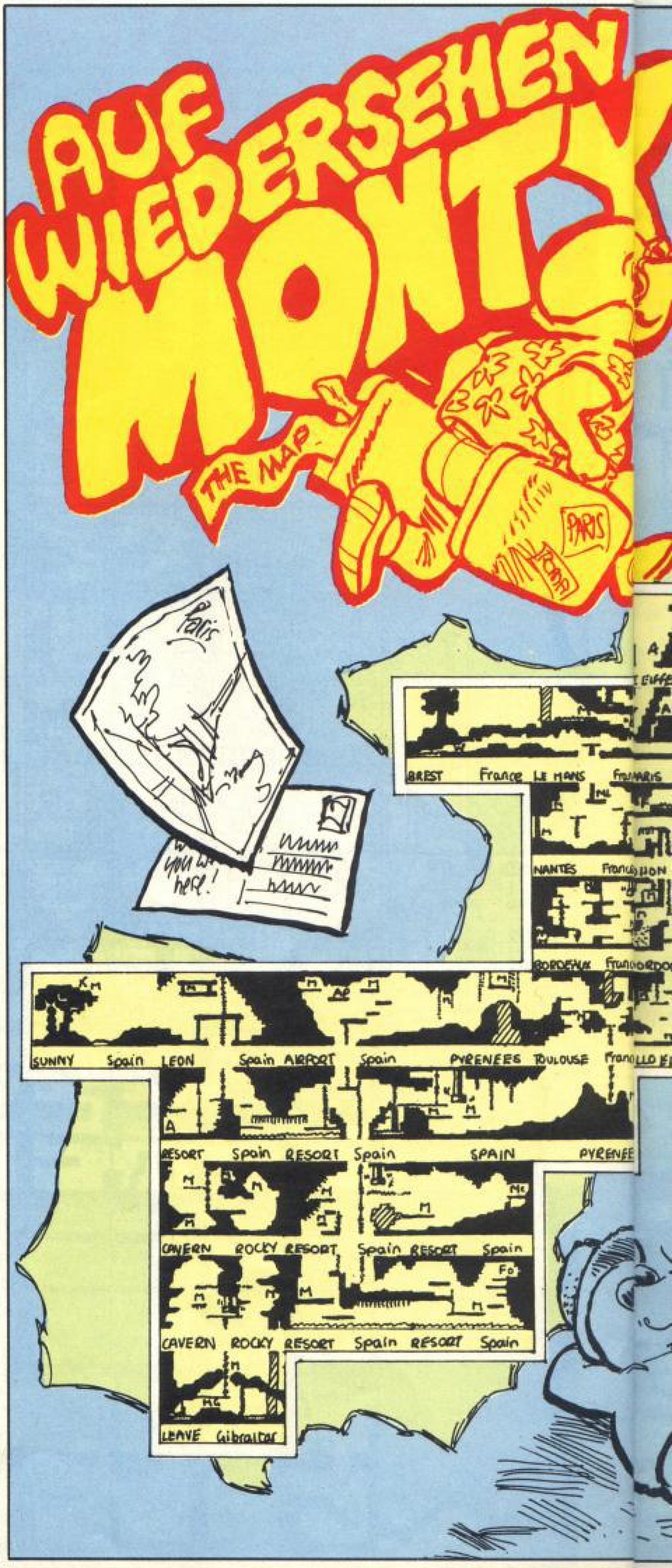
Find Rickley The Camera – which is, in fact, a coke machine. Shoot this and take control of it using LOREAN as the password. You must now give Koke the programs Hack1prg, Radarprg, and Atmostxt.

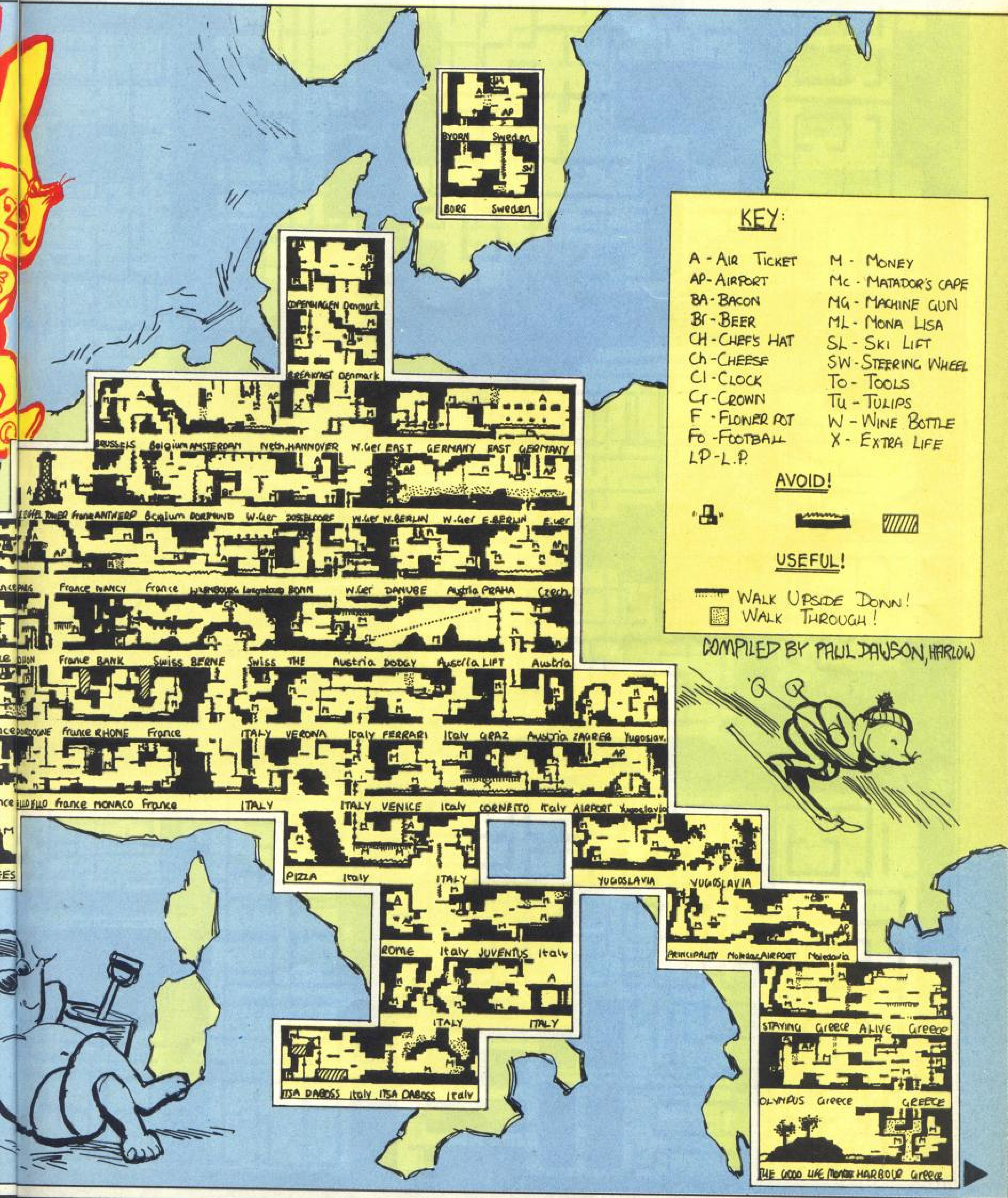
Take Koke to Queen and board the ship – under no circumstances crash Koke. Take Queen back to the harbour and dock it. Now take Koke off Queen and find Aviata. Ram the plane and Koke should board it.

Now take Aviata to Manic Mine. At the centre of the mine is the Bunker Cap. The mine is guarded by Grundons, so be careful. Ram the Bunker Cap with Aviata and the final screen is displayed in all its glory – THE HUMAN RACE IS SAVED!

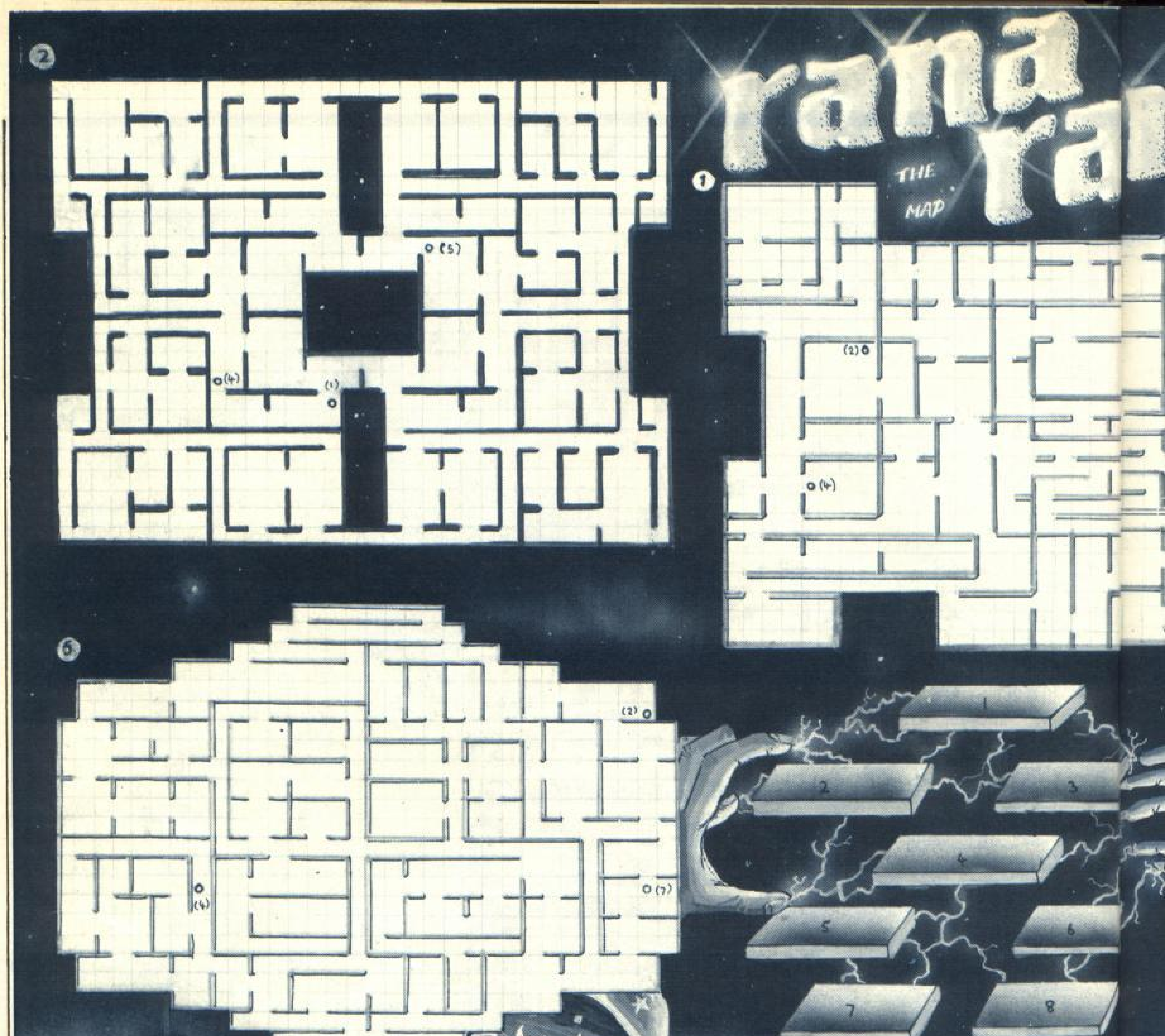
WIZBALL (Ocean)

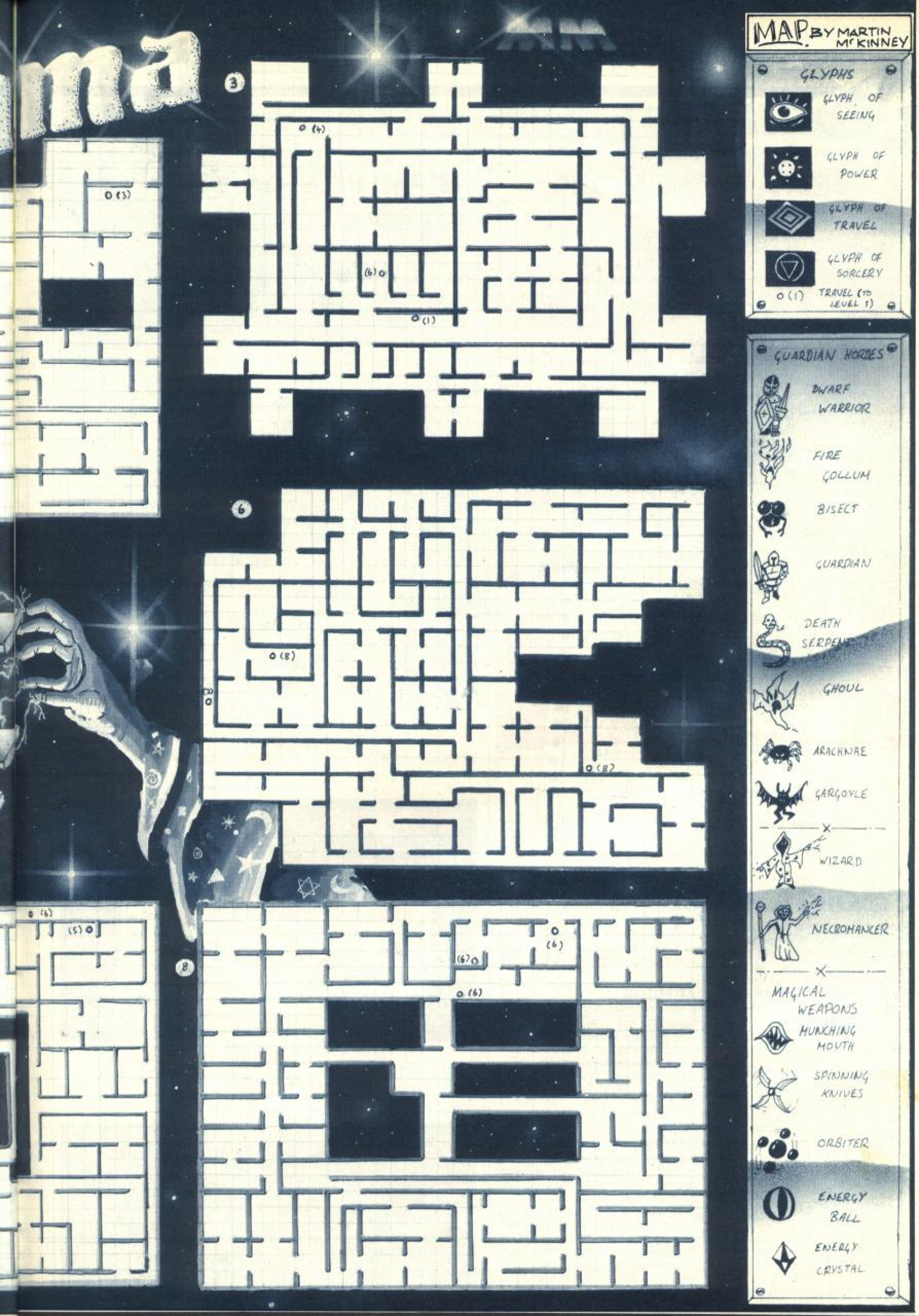
Did you know that once you've started gaining powers and completing levels it's possible to restart from the level you last completed when you die? For example, if you've completed level six, you can start at level five without having to go through the first four levels again. When death rears its explosive and twinkling head, and the title screen appears, press the number of the level you wish to visit, then restart – hey presto! Cheers to Col B of Crewe, Cheshire for that nifty Wiztip.





KEY:
A - AIR TICKET
AP - AIRPORT
BA - BACON
Br - BEER
CH - CHEF'S HAT
Ch - CHEESE
Cl - CLOCK
Cr - CROWN
F - FLOWER POT
Fo - FOOTBALL
LP - L.P.
M - MONEY
Mc - MATADOR'S CAPE
MG - MACHINE GUN
ML - MONA LISA
SL - SKI LIFT
SW - STEERING WHEEL
To - TOOLS
Tu - TULIPS
W - WINE BOTTLE
X - EXTRA LIFE
AVOID!
USEFUL!
WALK UPSIDE DOWN!
WALK THROUGH!
COMPILED BY PAUL DAWSON, HARLOW
BYORN Sweden
BORG Sweden
COPENHAGEN Denmark
BREAKFAST Denmark
BRUSSELS Belgium AMSTERDAM Neth. HANNOVER W.Ger EAST GERMANY EAST GERMANY
W.Ger N.BERLIN W.Ger E.BERLIN E.Ger
France NANCY France
W.Ger DANUBE Austria PRAHA Czech
France BANK Swiss BERNE Swiss THE Austria DODGY Austria LIFT Austria
France RHONE France ITALY VERONA Italy FERRARI Italy GRAZ Austria ZAGREB Yugoslav.
France MONACO France ITALY
ITALY VENICE Italy CORNETTO Italy AIRPORT Yugoslavia
PIZZA Italy ITALY YUGOSLAVIA YUGOSLAVIA
ROME Italy JUVENTUS Italy
ITALY ITALY
ITSA DABOSS Italy ITSA DABOSS Italy
STAYING Greece ALIVE Greece
OLYMPUS Greece GREECE
HARBOUR Greece


rana
THE
MAP
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
(5)
(4)
(1)
(2)
(7)
(3)


MAP BY MARTIN McKINNEY
GLYPHS
GLYPH OF SEEING
GLYPH OF POWER
GLYPH OF TRAVEL
GLYPH OF SORCERY
o (1) TRAVEL (TO LEVEL 1)
GUARDIAN HORDES
DWARF WARRIOR
FIRE GOLLUM
BISECT
GUARDIAN
DEATH SERPENT
GHOUL
ARACHNAE
GARGOYLE
WIZARD
NECROMANCER
MAGICAL WEAPONS
MUNCHING MOUTH
SPINNING KNIVES
ORBITER
ENERGY BALL
ENERGY CRYSTAL
3
6
8
o (4)
o (3)
(6) o
o (1)
o (8)
o (8)
o (6)
(5) o
(6) o
o (6)
o (6)

ASTERIX AND THE MAGIC CAULDRON (Melbourne House)

Here's an infinite lives, boars and potions listing for good old Legobrix and Sticklebrix, the fat sprites from Melbourne House. Mind you, if you were unfortunate enough to buy this wasted licence you'd already know about infinite bores . . . Anyway, thanks to Mick Mills **and** Al **from the Isle of Man.**

```
10 L=49152
20 FOR X=1 TO 10:T=0
30 FOR Y=1 TO 8
40 READ A:POKE L,A
50 L=L+1:T=T+A
60 NEXT
70 READ C:IF T=C THEN 90
80 PRINT"ERROR IN LINE"X*10+90:END
90 NEXT
95 PRINT"SYS 49152 TO LOAD AND
RUN"
100 DATA 169, 1, 170, 168, 32, 186, 255,
169, 1150
110 DATA 0, 32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255,
169, 1145
120 DATA 132, 141, 34, 5, 169, 47, 141, 35,
704
130 DATA 5, 162, 40, 189, 37, 192, 157, 0,
782
140 DATA 2, 202, 16, 247, 96, 169, 234,
141, 1107
150 DATA 124, 1, 141, 127, 1, 32, 129, 5,
560
160 DATA 169, 24, 141, 51, 91, 169, 2, 141,
788
170 DATA 52, 91, 76, 0, 90, 169, 173, 141,
792
180 DATA 92, 33, 141, 0, 66, 169, 1, 141,
643
190 DATA 194, 56, 76, 184, 4, 0, 0, 0, 514
```

MIAMI VICE (Ocean)

This designer Mick Mills **and** Al **listing not only gives infinite energy, but also disables sprite/sprite collision when you're in the car.**

To get the listing working, first type:

POKE 44,9:POKE 2340,0:NEW (RETURN)

And then type in the listing. RUN **it and follow the on-screen instructions.**

```
10 L=2176
20 FOR X=1 TO 9:T=0
30 FOR Y=1 TO 8
40 READ A:POKE L,A
50 L=L+1:T=T+A
60 NEXT
70 READ C:IF T=C THEN 90
80 PRINT"ERROR IN LINE"X*10+90:END
90 NEXT
99 PRINT"SYS 2176 TO LOAD AND RUN"
100 DATA 169, 1, 170, 168, 32, 186, 255,
169, 1150
110 DATA 0, 32, 189, 255, 32, 213, 255,
169, 1145
120 DATA 32, 141, 234, 4, 169, 167, 141,
235, 1123
130 DATA 4, 169, 183, 141, 228, 5, 169, 8,
907
140 DATA 141, 236, 4, 141, 229, 5, 96, 153,
1005
150 DATA 10, 0, 72, 165, 11, 201, 1, 208,
668
160 DATA 4, 169, 16, 133, 11, 104, 96, 169,
702
170 DATA 8, 141, 244, 35, 169, 0, 141, 4,
742
180 DATA 15, 141, 7, 39, 76, 0, 9, 0, 287
```

WONDERBOY (Activision)

If you fancy an unlimited supply of Wonder Boys to help you rescue Tina, just type in and RUN **this** Zoltan Kelemen **listing.**

```
3 FOR I=512 TO 562:READ A:POKE
I,A:C=C+A:NEXT I:IF C=5325 THEN SYS
520
4 PRINT"ERROR IN DATA"
5 DATA 169, 44, 141, 116, 10, 76, 0, 1, 169,
40, 141, 40, 3, 169, 2, 141, 41, 3, 198, 157,
169, 0, 162
6 DATA 1, 168, 32, 186, 255, 32, 189, 255,
32, 213, 255, 14, 217, 2, 76, 81, 3, 169, 49,
141, 159, 2
7 DATA 169, 234, 141, 160, 2, 96
```

CYBORG (CRL)

Pimpf, a mysterious person from Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan, is 'mightily dischuffed' with ZZAP! – he reckons CRL's *Cyborg* is worth much more than the 45% it was awarded. Never mind, it's all down to personal taste you know . . . Anyway, here are some tips to console you *Cyborg* fans.

DOORS

The control panel is almost always to the right of the door. EXAMINE them and the panel should appear in your vid-screen (lining up Cyborg correctly may take some practice). Type in the relevant code, depending on which level you are on, and the door opens.

Stand in front of the terminal, EXAMINE and you will be asked for the relevant code. Enter it and press RETURN to get the prompt 'ACCEPTED. DISKS . . . ON.' Now type DIR or DIRECTORY to see what files the terminal holds (the most common are CODE and CONTROL), and take your pick. MISSION should give you on idea of what the aliens are planning. To leave the terminal type EXIT.

ARMOUR

If your armour energy is getting a bit on the low side, keep going in and out of a lift, letting the doors close behind you – your armour level rises quickly, which saves you from having to wait around for it to climb! All doors that you have opened on a level automatically shut again if you enter a lift.

ALIENS

To avoid most alien fire, simply move up and down as you run (stagger?) along the corridor. The cylinder type top-hat robot that cleans all the debris away is a real pain in the behind. Don't try to run past it – chances are you will definitely cop it. Either move into a lift or doorway, or run to the end of the corridor as it usually turns around and leaves you alone.

And that draws a close to this month tips section. Many thanks to all you who sent in tips. Don't despair if your tips haven't been printed – I've only got limited space, and your contribution could well be included next month . . . or perhaps it's being saved for something special (but more of that later).

Another point, by all means write in with suggestions or requests (I do read all your letters), but please don't send in an SAE asking for specific information – sadly, I just don't have the time to answer letters personally. Send all tips, maps, POKES etc. and mail regarding the Tips section generally to: ZZAP! TIPS, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SY8 1DB. **See you next month.**



NOW IS YOUR CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN 1987'S MOST EXCITING RECORD-BREAKING EVENT – THE FIRST EVER SUCCESSFUL CROSSING OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN BY HOT-AIR BALLOON!

RICHARD BRANSON AND PER LINDSTRAND (THE BALLOON'S DESIGNER) MAN THE 'VIRGIN ATLANTIC FLYER' AND THEY HAVE BEEN CHALLENGED TO A RACE BY ANOTHER BALLOONIST!

THIS SPLIT-SCREEN ARCADE GAME IS FULL OF ACTION AND IS DESIGNED FOR EITHER ONE OR TWO PLAYERS. YOU PLAY A POWERFUL, BUT MISCHIEVOUS EAGLE THAT CAN HELP (OR HINDER!) RICHARD. YOU CAN HELP CONTROL RICHARD'S (OR HIS RIVAL'S) BALLOON ALTITUDE AND COURSE AND HELP WARD OFF THE DASTARDLY HINDRANCES THAT HAVE BEEN ARRANGED FOR YOUR DOWNFALL (LITERALLY!).

YOUR OPPONENT ALSO HAS AN EAGLE AS A MASCOT AND BETWEEN THE PAIR OF YOU IT IS OUT AND OUT WAR MOST OF THE TIME!

SO TAKE FLIGHT AND GOOD LUCK!

TRANSATLANTIC BALLOON CHALLENGE is available from all good software retailers, or directly from us. Please make crossed cheques or postal orders payable to Virgin Games Ltd and send to Virgin Games Ltd, 2/4 Vernon Yard, Portobello Road, London W11 2DX. PLEASE DO NOT POST COINS OR MONEY!

☐ Commodore 64/128 (£7.95) ☐ Spectrum 48/128 (£7.95)
☐ Amstrad CPC cassette (£7.95) ☐ Amstrad CPC disc (£12.95)

Name__________

Address__________

____

Total money enclosed__________



THE SCORELORD'S HIGH-SCORING HEROES

1942 (Elite)
1,115,200 J Ashbrook & G Warnock, Bradford, W Yorks
871,500 Martin Coyle, Clifton, Notts
754,300 James Whitworth, Oldham, Lancs

ACE (Cascade)
100,000 Andrew Welch, Stevenage, Herts
83,380 M Horsey, Waltham Abbey, Kent
42,550 Mark Jeffery, Dianella, W Australia

ALIENS (Electric Dreams)
126,500 Paul Griffiths, Llandudno, N Wales
52,725 Sean Meadows, North End, Portsmouth
10,240 Stacey King, Goffs Oak, Herts

ALLEYKAT (Hewson)
9,334,400 Richard Hudson, Copmanthorpe, York
8,917,300 Tony Shoreman, Billington, Lancs
8,170,250 Kevin Evans, Llandudno, Gwynedd

ANTIRIAD (Palace Software)
Completed in . . .
3:06 M Gooday, Bishop's Stortford, Herts
3:40 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs
3:52 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks

ARKANOID (Imagine)
1,262,190 Jonathon Webb, Highbridge, Somerset
979,600 Paul Stapley, Whitby, N Yorks
856,860 Stephen Blidgeon, Wythenshawe, Manchester

ARMOURDILLO (Code Masters)
11,300 Adie griffiths, Crowborough, E Sussex

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY (Gremlin Graphics)
18,000 Sanjay Vaghela, Rugby, Warks
15,950 Graham Millie, East Harnham, Wilts
12,427 Casey Gallacher, Reading, Berks

BARBARIAN (Palace Software)
13,100 Howard Worton, Southwark, London
12,100 Ciaran Brennan, ZZAP! Towers

BEAMRIDER (Activision)
980,420 Steve Jarratt, ZZAP! Towers
272,174 Steve Tye, Kidderminster, Worcs

BMX SIMULATOR (Codemasters)
4,260 Adrian Broadley, Manby, Lincs

BOMBJACK (Elite)
4,052,870 Jez Foy, Tring, Herts
3,264,600 Wayne Winter, Lawrence Weston, Bristol
1,384,130 Casey Gallacher, Reading, Berks

BOMBJACK II (Elite)
2,408,900 Lee Gregory, Chesterfield, Derbyshire
1,243,400 Paul Wheatley, S Norwood, London
483,200 Mark Hemsworth, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

BREAKTHRU (US Gold)
246,000 Vincent Old, Wellingborough, Northants
138,050 Paul Gibson, Sunderland, Tyne And Wear
111,900 Gary Rice, Colchester, Essex

BULLDOG (Gremlin Graphics)
1,207,200 Tony Shoreman, Billington, Lancs
1,109,500 Casey Gallacher, Calcot, Reading
1,108,900 Brett Warburton, Hollingworth, Cheshire

CAULDRON II (Palace Software)
1,508,550 Cliff Nobresa, St Helier, Jersey
153,750 John Reynolds, Duxford, Cambridge
132,400 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham

COBRA (Ocean)
285,900 Philip Stevens, Alfreton, Derbyshire
93,400 Patrick Green, Burnley, Lancs
89,200 Stephen Wildridge, Great Sutton, S Wirral

CRYSTAL CASTLES (US Gold)
677,992 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
668,995 Richard Hardbattle, Nuneaton, Warks
648,200 Nigel Leather, Northwich, Cheshire

DAN DARE (Virgin)
7,423 Sankar Sahdevan, London E12
7,397 Scott Fulfitt, Endover, Devon
7,297 Shaun Alcock, Tyldesley, Manchester

DECATHLON (Firebird)
9,840 Howard Worton, Southwark, London

DELTA (Thalamus)
1,258,430 Colin Redfern, Heywood, Lancs
895,850 Aidon Donnelley, Kilmacud, Dublin
371,220 Jonathan Wood, Edgeware, Middx

DRAGON'S LAIR (Software Projects)
63,997 Sean Walker (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia
35,410 Martin Coyle, Clifton, Notts
33,750 Simon Cole, Chelmsford, Essex

DUET (Elite)
137,520 Gary Smith, Basingstoke, Hants
113,520 Paul Molyneux, Doncaster, S Yorks

ENCOUNTER (Novagen)
1,888,000 Anon, Crewe, Cheshire
1,488,900 Kenneth Shewry, Cramlington, N Humbs
1,135,500 Stephen Blidgeon, Wythenshawe, Manchester

ENDURO RACER (Activision)
2,227,475 Dale Somerset, Wadsley Bridge, Sheffield
1,299,832 Howard Worton, Southwark, London
1,857,098 Steven Young, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear

ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE (Software Projects)
92,742 Craig Knight, Keyworth, Notts
78,538 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland
76,584 Ian Sullivan, Forest Hill, London

EXPRESS RAIDER (US Gold)
68,450 Gavin Shute, Aylesbury, Bucks

THE EQUALISER (The Power House)
20,620 Dean Stinton, Botley, Southampton
9,270 Graeme Crichton, Irvine, Ayrshire
7,980 Adrian Broadley, Manby, Lincs

FEUD (Bulldog)
44% Richard Morgan, Fordingbridge, Hampshire

FIRELORD (Hewson)
145,205 Richard Pargeter, Coventry, W Mids
143,160 Daniel Osbourne, Hornsea, N Humbs
116,805 Damian Ward, Harrogate, W Yorks

FIRETRACK (Electric Dreams)
664,960 Kristian Bruun, Copenhagen, Denmark
527,290 Johnny Larsen, Copenhagen, Denmark

FIST II (Melbourne House)
1,753,000 Steven Rolf, Kettering, Northants
1,560,800 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks
1,220,000 Steven Guilfoyle, Oldham

FIST II TOURNAMENT (Melbourne House)
7,506,000 Shahjahan Alhassan, Slough, Berks
6,012,300 Steven Rolf, Kettering, Nothants
5,096,000 Kevin Lennard, St Helier, Sark

FLOYD THE DROID (Ariolasoft)
11,830 Sean Walker, (Runsoft), Australia
7,970 Matthew Williams, Yeovil, Somerset
6,040 Sam Shields, Canterburv, Kent

FUTURE KNIGHT (Gremlin Graphics)
115,500 Mark Whitby, Warboys, Cambs
109,800 Billy Watson, Cardiff
96,400 Michael Pihl, Kumla, Sweden

GALIVAN (Imagine)
287,000 Chris McLean, Helsby, Cheshire

GAUNTLET (US Gold)
Merlin The Wizard
7,541,404 Graeme Smith, Little Stoke, Bristol
6,581,019 Andrew Cooper, Sedgley, W Mids
5,200,100 John Coe, Sheffield

Questor The Elf
6,850,250 John Coe, Sheffield
4,289,710 Andrew Cooper, Sedgley, W Mids
2,588,566 Casey Gallacher, Calcot, Reading

Thor The Warrior
7,376,198 Andrew Cooper, Sedgley, W Mids
3,625,130 John Coe, Sheffield
3,220,077 John Reynolds, Duxford, Cambs

Thyra The Valkyrie
3,872,019 Andrew Cooper, Sedgley, W Mids
2,352,500 John Coe, Sheffield
1,920,013 Daniel Osbourne, Hornsea, N Humbs

GAUNTLET: DEEPER DUNGEONS (US Gold)
Merlin The Wizard
8,787,195 Asher Rashid, Thornaby, Cleveland
4,350,297 Paul Cashley, Bishopston, Bristol
1,611,473 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks

Thor The Warrior
4,678,932 David Taylor, Alvington, Glos
3,974,521 Paul Cashley, Bishopston, Bristol
2,999,320 Richard Hardbattle, Nuneaton, Warks

Questor the Elf
2,497,341 Paul Cashley, Bishopston, Bristol

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS (Elite)
531,890 Christian Major, Norwich, Norfolk
456,060 Chris Goodswen, Norwich, Norfolk
242,000 Stuart Galloway, Yardley Wood, Birmingham

GREEN BERET (Imagine)
1,301,850 Mark Cunningham, Newtown Abbey, Co Antrim
1,204,150 Paul Wheatley, S Norwood, London
1,059,890 Simon Cole, Chelmsford, Essex

GRIBBLY'S DAY OUT (Hewson)
64,879 Ryan Kelly, Glasgow
62,899 Peter Evans, Cardigan, Dyfed
25,587 Michael Gandy, Oswestry, Shropshire

GUNSHIP (Microprose)
278,785 Richard Mellor, Bridgwater, Somerset
265,990 David Nicol, Heworth, York
124,660 Donna Nicol, Heworth, York

HACKER II (Activision)
Completed in . . .
15 mins Steven Bodey, Perth, Australia

HEAD OVER HEELS (Ocean)
70,000 Ciaran Brennan, ZZAP! Towers

HERCULES (Alpha/Omega)
815,920 Nils-Olav Barvag, 6770 Nordfjordeid, Norway
755,500 Robert Hemphill, Port Glasgow
560,910 G Beddows, Rugeley, Staffs

INTERNATIONAL KARATE (System 3)
382,250 Steven Bodey, Perth, Australia
336,750 Peter Hunt, Hook, Hants
335,220 F Lapp, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST (Pandora)
1,049,800 Frank the Menhir, Herts
818,500 Stewart Waters, Colchester, Essex
769,600 Stephen Liddle, Slough, Berks

IRIDIS ALPHA (Llamasoft)
349,520 Colin Redfern, Heywood, Lancs
193,260 Jonathan Wood, Edgeware, Middx
141,050 C Gorham, Braintree, Essex

JAILBREAK (Konami)
195,500 Paul Gibson, Sunderland, Tyne And Wear
102,500 Malcolm Redfern, Preston, Lancs
85,500 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks

JEEP COMMAND (Bug Byte)
303,990 J Gheorghisor (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia
250,350 Dave Breed, Cullercoats, Tyne & Wear
227,380 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks

KNIGHT GAMES (English Software)
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68,355 Hassan Mussad, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
67,620 Paul Ratje, Newport, Isle of Wight
66,345 Simon Wilcox, Ipswich, Suffolk

KNUCKLEBUSTERS (Melbourne House)
11,700 Craig Bent, Failsworth, Manchester
6,300 Steve Quinnell, New Eltham, London
5,700 Bharat Vaghela, Rugby, Warks

KORONIS RIFT (Activision)
134,960 Stephen Mason, Stevenage, Herts
128,780 Mark Tortolano, Stirling, Scotland
96,430 Colin Burroughs, Ipswich, Suffolk

KRAKOUT (Gremlin Graphics)
21,184,770 Michael Eikmans, The Netherlands
12,740,800 Dave & Brett Warburton, Cheshire
3,068,500 Steven Packer, Chelmsford, Essex



KUNG-FU MASTER (US Gold)
4,785,852 Liam Chivers, Battenhall, Worcs
4,385,990 Stephen Pennel, Fordingbridge, Hants
3,802,983 Andrew Dallyn, Braughton, Devon

LAW OF THE WEST (US Gold)
9,650 Svein Kierstad, 6017 Asetranda, Norway
7,937 Lee Smith, Billingham, Cleveland
7,694 Sean Walker (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia

LEADER BOARD (US Gold/Access)
NOVICE
-25 Julian Smith, Halesowen, West Mids
-25 Christopher Lamb, Liverpool
-25 Paul Barnett, Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire

AMATEUR
-27 Jonathon Webb, Highbridge, Somerset
-23 Paul Allan, Aberdeen
-23 G McKenzie, Dunbar, E Lothian

PROFESSIONAL
-24 Paul Allan, Aberdeen
-22 Robin Evans, Tring, Herts
-22 Stewart Rogers, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

LEADERBOARD: EXECUTIVE EDITION (US Gold/Access)
NOVICE
-21 Stuart MacKissack, Knightswood, Glasgow
-14 C Knowles, Sydenham, London

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-18 Stewart Rogers, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

LIGHTFORCE (FTL)
2,526,975 Jake E, West Bromwich, W Mids
2,296,360 Taki Liberopoulos, Athens, Greece
2,259,700 Stephen Ross, Ryde, Isle of Wight

MARIO BROTHERS (Ocean)
449,380 Jake E, West Bromwich, W Mids
252,620 Ozz, New Eltham, London

MERCENARY: THE SECOND CITY (Novagen)
7,942,196cr Russell Wallace, Dunoughaire, Co Dublin
7,442,000cr Brian Mainwaring, Talke Pits, Staffs
7,086,000cr Glenn Haworth, Swallow, Lincs

MILK RACE (Mastertronic)
7,794 Gary Smith, Basingstoke, Hants

MISSION AD (Odin)
59,455 Mark Craft, Bearwood, Bournemouth
48,670 David Barker, Feltham, Middx
36,475 Jez Foy, Tring, Herts

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (Databyte)
412,450 Adam Trewella, Stapleton, Bristol
398,450 Ozz, New Eltham, London
374,300 Lucy Kaupe, Streatham, London

MUTANTS (Ocean)
31,025,750 Gareth Williams, Swansea, W Glamorgan
26,460,850 Gavin Richardson, Swinton, Manchester
26,132,150 Jonathan West, Halifax, W Yorks

NEMESIS (Konami)
12,341,200 Terry Bourdram, Colindale, London
11,241,100 Stephen Ross, Ryde, Isle of Wight
7,703,600 D Birch & B Digrigg, Friskney, Lincs

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK (Martech)
7,600 Gavin Shute, Aylesbury, Bucks
4,540 Dale Somerset, Wadsley Bridge, Sheffield

NINJA MASTER (Mastertronic)
485,840 Gordon Shearer, Rothes, Morayshire
198,880 Robert Futter, Downham Market, Norfolk
196,315 Michael Pihl, Kumla, Sweden

NOMAD (Ocean)
5,264 John Gheorghisor, (Runsoft), Australia
4,065 Paul Want, Harrogate, N Yorks
3,885 Paul Tudor, Stourbridge, Pedmore

NUCLEAR EMBARGO (Micropool)
31,810 Paul James, Nailsea, Bristol

OLLI AND LISSA (Firebird)
19,820 Lee Barker, Northwich, Cheshire
10,000 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs
7,953 Mick Wall, Hillsborough, Sheffield

PANTHER (Mastertronic)
250,900 Liam Chivers, Battenhall, Worcs
215,500 Jason Birnie, Cranleigh, Surrey
200,940 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey

PAPERBOY (Elite)
301,400 Mark Rolf, Kettering, Northants
300,700 John White, Whitefield, Manchester
140,700 Steve Quinnell, New Eltham, London

PARADROID (Hewson)
364,290 Shazad Iqbal, Bury, Lancs
300,850 Gavin Burnett, Westhill, Inverness
298,800 Liam Chivers, Battenhall, Worcs

PARADROID PLUS (Hewson)
86,500 Brian Yeo, Tarbolton, Ayrshire
63,200 Adam Beabies, Tarbolton, Ayrshire
11,700 Richard Morgan, Fordingbridge, Hampshire

PARALLAX (Ocean)
106,850 Ali Kerswell, Guildford, Surrey
89,300 Jason Birnie, Cranleigh, Surrey
78,400 Adam Pracy, Newton Flotman, Norwich

PARK PATROL (Firebird)
994,990 Simon Jones, Chelmsford, Essex
993,130 Paul Harwood, Penge, London
991,570 Andrew McMinn, Colchester, Essex

PHANTOMS OF THE ASTEROID (Mastertronic)
561,412 M A Grist, Reading, Berks
334,054 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey
286,064 Chris Napier, Long Marston, Herts

PING PONG (Imagine)
97,060 Barrie Hallett, Lawrence Weston, Bristol
65,200 Kevin Evans, Llandudno, Gwynedd
62,200 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen

POD (Mastertronic)
1,468,440 Karsten Toksvig, 8832 SKAIS, Denmark
919,040 Adam Loxton, Street, Somerset
868,000 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs

PSYCASTRIA (Audiogenic)
4,249,600 M Gooday, Bishop's Stortford, Herts

RAGING BEAST (Firebird)
131,906 Mark Gunningham, Newtown Abbey, Co Antrim
104,374 Paul Ellis, Barnehurst, Kent
67,092 Matthew Minshull, Great Barr, Birmingham

RAMBO (Ocean)
12,198,800 Anon, Newry, County Down
8,154,600 Bryn Monk, Oswestry, Shropshire
8,001,200 Gavin Burnett, Westhill, Inverness

RANARAMA (Hewson)
3,358,400 Richard Leadbetter, Witham, Essex
1,822,200 Craig Knight, Keyworth, Notts
1,555,700 Martin Draper, Alfreton, Derby

RIVER RAID (Firebird)
259,235 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

ROCK 'N' WRESTLE (Melbourne House)
3,125,100 Jamie Orridge, Gedling, Nottingham
2,655,200 Alan Smith, Glenrothers, Fife

941,300 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen

SABOTEUR (Durell)
£1,175,000 Daniel Maurice, Redland, Bristol
£971,300 Jari Jaakola, Inkeroinen, Finland
£861,700 Gareth Mitchell, Mirfield, W Yorks

SANXION (Thalamus)
1,006,466 Steven Malpass, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs
784,390 Stephen Gandy, Halesowen, W Mids
517,860 Peter Williams, Preston, Lancs

SCARABAEUS (Ariolasoft)
277,824 Robert Berry, Fleetwood, Lancs
273,744 Douglas Clark, Carstairs Junction, Lanark
256,128 Luis Troyano, Stockport, Cheshire

SCOOBY DOO (Elite)
248,600 Sean McDonagh, Jarrow, Tyne & Wear
194,550 Gareth Mackie, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire
153,600 Stuart Kelly, Reading, Berks

THE SENTINEL (Firebird)
(Levels Jumped)
53 C Knowles, Sydenham, London
47 Ian Robinson, Tottenham, London
42 Martin Draper, Alfreton, Derby

SHAO-LIN'S ROAD (The Edge)
128,420 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs
36,164 Steven Young, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear
31,430 Howard Worton, Southwark, London

SHOCKWAY RIDER (FTL)
1,524,798 Matthew Phypers, Sunnyhill, Derby
291,000 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
88,350 Howard Worton, Southwark, London

SILENT SERVICE (US Gold/Microprose)
(TONS SUNK)
910,100 Karsten Tokisuig, Drosselvej 6, Denmark
563,100 Steven Hall, Croughton, N Hants
763,200 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland

SKATE ROCK (Bubble Bus)
288,430 Justin Cole, Huddersfield, W Yorks
239,020 Sean Walker, (Runsoft), Australia
223,280 Stephen Bloor, Nuneaton, Warks

SKY RUNNER (Cascade)
$669,700 John Doyle, Kilmarnoch, Ayrshire
$190,600 Martin Dobson, London E12
$125,500 Peter Hulme, Bishop's Stortford, Herts

SKOOL DAZE (Micromega)
126,910 Anthony Duiker (Runsoft), Melbourne, Australia
120,780 Gordon Shearer, Rothes, Morayshire
104,340 Scott Moore, Fixby, Huddersfield

SLAMBALL (Americana)
5,768,870 Carelton Shaw, London, N10
5,504,870 Gavin Burnett, Westhill, Inverness
4,684,710 Martin Dalton, Rochester, Kent

SLAP FIGHT (Imagine)
111,050 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

SPACE HARRIER (Elite)
6,976,540 Dave Smith, Exeter, Devon
4,263,900 J Ashbrook & G warnock, Bradford, W Yorks
3,177,500 Casey Gallacher, Calcot, Reading

SPLIT PERSONALITIES (Domark)
680,400 Mrs L Hayden, London E16
665,200 Mrs J Carroll, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset
505,100 Michael Skelcher, Wentoning, Beds

STAR GLIDER (Rainbird)
110,725 Brian Mainwaring, Talke Pits, Staffs
54,930 Ian Sullivan, Forest Hill, London
46,325 Damian Ward, Harrogate, W Yorks

STARQUAKE (Bubble Bus)
287,763 Nigel Froud, Godalming, Surrey
287,140 Ove Knudseu, 5033 Fyllingsdaleu, Norway
273,667 Per Kjellander, Stenungsund, Sweden

STREET SURFER (Bubble Bus)
21,108 Jonathan Stock, Denton, Northampton
16,270 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland
15,811 Adie Griffiths, Crowborough, E Sussex

SUPER CYCLE (US Gold/Epyx)
700,400 Declan Quinn, Bessbrook, Newry Co Down
320,160 A Verhaeghe, Bletchley, Bucks
269,310 Andy Girvan, Corby, Northants

TAU CETI (CRL)
21,055 Andrew Tarski, Dursley, Glos
20,465 Robert Elliot, Middlesbrough, Cleveland
20,440 Shaun Russell, Shildon, Co Durham

TENTH FRAME (US Gold/Access)
Amateur
269 Andrew Dodd, Normanton, Derby
268 Vincent Cox, Wellingborough, N Hants
266 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen

Professional
233 Neil Taylor, Bracknell, Berks
214 Graeme Dutch, Tillydrone, Aberdeen
202 Graham Millie, East Harnham, Wilts

TERRA CRESTA (Imagine)
402,100 Michael Dunajew, Adelaide, Australia
371,800 Robert Hemphill, Port Glasgow
341,000 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks

THAI BOXING (Anco)
17,020 Dave Smith, Exeter, Devon

THRUST (Firebird)
4,182,050 Arlo Swinson, Doncaster, S Yorks
3,500,800 Declan Quinn, Bessbrook, Newry Co Down
3,670,700 Anon, Newry, Co Down

TOY BIZARRE (Activision)
223,420 J D Oliver, Ipswich, Suffolk
144,700 Sherif Salama, Cairo, Egypt
102,900 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers

TRAILBLAZER (Gremlin Graphics)
1,123,350 Jason Cooper, Wednesbury, W Mids
1,120,040 Henry Rawlinson, Salisbury, Wilts
828,270 Ian Robinson, Tottenham, London

TRAP (Alligata)
481,900 Lawry Simm, Liverpool L23
429,510 Colin Bayne, Glenrothes, Fife
328,500 Robert Elliot, Middlesborough, Cleveland

UCHI MATA (Martech)
378,760 Mark Sexton, Lancing, W Sussex
353,795 Nicholas Lester, Dudley, W Mids
326,655 D Simmons, Wythenshawe, Manchester

URIDIUM (Hewson)
22,906,385 CN, SP, MD, JK, Marston Green, Birmingham
3,820,020 David Horsburgh, Uddington, Glasgow
3,428,985 Andrew Mackay, Liverpool 18

URIDIUM PLUS (Hewson)
197,925 Russell Wallace, Co Dublin, Ireland
175,405 Paul Wheatley, S Norwood, London
167,000 Damian Boocock, Colne, Lancs

V (Ocean)
28,600 Peter Williams, Preston, Lancs
24,600 D A Ashcroft, Wirral, Cheshire
23,400 Paul Evans, Redruth, Cornwall

VIDEO MEANIES (Mastertronic)
57,798 Adrian Broadley, Manby, Lincs

VOIDRUNNER (Mastertronic)
4,903,840 Adam Loxton, Street, Somerset
3,800,564 Steven Young, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear
3,343,637 Mark Payne, Hockley, Essex

WARHAWK (Firebird)
6,229,526 Glenn Haworth, Swallow, Lincs
3,322,648 Jamie Orridge, Gedling, Nottingham
3,172,288 Peter Hunt, Hook, Hants

WAR (Martech)
426,144 Casey Gallacher, Calcot, Reading
270,782 Ricky Smith, Basingstoke, Hants
153,968 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey

WEST BANK (Gremlin Graphics)
210,000 Jon Cullen, Hillgate, Stockport
131,600 James Lavelle, Copmanthorpe, York
115,530 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks

WIZARD'S LAIR (Bubble Bus)
154,140 Craig Wills, Taunton, Somerset
152,735 Steven Medcraft, Rayleigh, Essex
133,085 Nik Yarker, Blaby, Leicester

WIZBALL (Ocean)
632,820 Col B & Mark G, Crewe, Cheshire
631,670 A Fellows & D Jenkins, Caerphilly, Mid Glam
545,300 Adam Loxton, Street, Somerset

XEVIOUS (US Gold)
281,280 Jonathon Webb, Highbridge, Somerset
196,270 Fintan Brady, Virginia, Ireland
173,860 John McGruther, Bishopton, Scotland

YIE AR KUNG-FU (Imagine)
394,700 M Brown & M Grange, Borrowash, Derby
154,200 Andrew Manley, Bush Hill Park, Enfield
152,260 Scott Gracen, Whitley Bay, Tyne And Wear

YIE AR KUNG-FU II (Imagine)
288,300 Carl Adams, Tooting, London
183,300 Ian Coulter, Leeds
134,400 Rene Groenewoud, Heerhugowaard, The Netherlands

Z (Rhino)
701,250 Howard Clarke, Inverness, Scotland
671,450 Jake E, West Bromwich, W Mids
576,200 Stephen Ross, Ryde, Isle of Wight

ZOLYX (Firebird)
157,163 Julian Rignall, ZZAP! Towers
81,902 Ciaran Brennan ZZAP! Towers
75,283 A Dyctif, Ludlow, Shropshire

ZONE RANGER (Firebird)
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ZZAP! READERS' CH

GAMES TOP 30

1 *(1)* **WORLD GAMES** *(15%)*
US Gold/Epyx

2 *(2)* **LEADERBOARD** *(8%)*
US Gold/Access

3 *(3)* **GAUNTLET** *(8%)*
US Gold

4 *(6)* **URIDIUM** *(5%)*
Hewson

5 *(4)* **DELTA** *(5%)*
Thalamus

6 *(8)* **NEMESIS** *(3%)*
Konami

7 *(8)* **SANXION** *(3%)*
Thalamus

8 *(13)* **GUNSHIP** *(3%)*
Microprose

9 *(11)* **GREEN BERET** *(3%)*
Imagine, £8.95 cass

10 *(15)* **ELITE** *(3%)*
Firebird

11 *(12)* **SUPER CYCLE**
US Gold/Epyx

12 *(5)* **THE SENTINEL**
Firebird

13 *(7)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS**
Elite

14 *(27)* **ALIENS**
Electric Dreams

15 *(17)* **ARKANOID**
Imagine

16 *(16)* **THE SACRED ARMOUR OF ANTIRIAD**
Palace Software

17 *(21)* **INTERNATIONAL KARATE**
System 3

18 *(-)* **PARADROID**
Hewson

19 *(18)* **ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE**
Software Projects

20 *(26)* **SUMMER GAMES II**
US Gold/Epyx

21 *(14)* **INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST**
Pandora

22 *(10)* **PARK PATROL**
Firebird

23 *(23)* **PARALLAX**
Ocean

24 *(20)* **CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING**
US Gold/Epyx

25 *(19)* **PAPERBOY**
Elite

26 *(24)* **MERCENARY**
Novagen

27 *(25)* **180**
Mastertronic

28 *(-)* **INFILTRATOR**
US Gold

29 *(-)* **EXECUTIVE LEADERBOARD**
US Gold/Access

30 *(-)* **AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY**
Gremlin Graphics



CHARTS

AUGUST 1987

MUSIC TOP 10

1 *(1)* **SANXION** *(36%)*
Thalamus
Loading Music (Rob Hubbard)

2 *(6)* **DELTA** *(12%)*
Thalamus
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

3 *(3)* **GREEN BERET** *(9%)*
Imagine
Loading Music (Martin Galway)

4 *(8)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** *(7%)*
Elite
Main Theme (Mark Cooksey)

5 *(9)* **FLASH GORDON** *(6%)*
Mastertronic
Title Tune (Rob Hubbard)

6 *(6)* **THRUST** *(5%)*
Firebird
Firebird (Rob Hubbard)

7 *(4)* **KNUCKLEBUSTERS** *(4%)*
Melbourne House
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

8 *(-)* **LIGHTFORCE** *(2%)*
FTL
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard)

9 *(-)* **ARKANOID** *(2%)*
Imagine
Title Tune (Martin Galway)

10 *(-)* **AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY** *(2%)*
Gremlin Graphics
Main Theme (Rob Hubbard/Ben Daglish)



ZZAP! 64
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1 ....
2 ....
3 ....
4 ....
5 ....

I am also voting for the following piece of music:
(Commodore 64 ONLY)

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THE LIVING

ON GOLDEN GATE

Once again 007 returns, this time with Timothy Dalton on the big screen and a Domark sprite on your computer's monitor. *The Living Daylights*, has its Royal Premiere in London on Monday 29 June. CURTIS HUTCHINSON recently took the opportunity to pay a behind-the-scenes visit to Pinewood Studios and have a chat to special effects wizard, John Richardson, while back at ZZAP! Headquarters, we take a look at the soon-to-be-released computer game.

REALLY it's all done by pieces of string and mirrors,' confides Oscar-winning 007 Special Effects Supervisor John Richardson. John's cheap and cheerful philosophy may sound simplistic in this age of high-tech SFX – but, as he points out, what's the point of building a gigantic hydraulic rig if the effect you want can be achieved with two pieces of rope and some timber?

'If the simple rig goes wrong all you have to do is tie a knot in the piece of rope; if the hydraulics go wrong than it's going to take you a week to get them fixed.'

There's no arguing with his approach when you've seen the impressive results in films like *The Omen*, *Superman – The Movie*, *A Bridge Too Far*, *Ladyhawke* and, most recently, *Aliens*, for which he won an Academy Award.

John is the son of the pioneering SFX man Cliff Richardson (who worked on many classic films made at Ealing Studios in the Forties and Fifties, including *In Which We Serve*), so he grew up with a unique entrée to the world of film-making.

He spent his school holidays in a studio workshop and on location, learning his father's trade; when John was 13, one such jaunt took him to Israel to assist his dad on *Exodus*. And John's young son is following in the family tradition by working with his dad as an SFX apprentice on the creature feature *Willows*, currently being shot at Elstree Studios (and produced by George Lucas).

It's a hard, practical job handling SFX, working on the nitty-gritty of what is and what isn't possible. And there's nothing glamorous about British film studios. John's 'office' on the *Willows* set is a Portakabin building stuck in the corner of the SFX workshop.

You could easily mistake John and his team for construction workers – theirs is not the starry-eyed, deep-pile-carpet, Havana-cigars side of film-making. There's no room for egos or pretensions in their workshop. They leave all that to the onscreen stars.

John has been involved with the Bond series since 1979, when he worked on the South American boat-chase sequence in *Moonraker*. Since then he's worked as SFX Supervisor on *Octopussy*, *A View To A Kill* and now *The Living Daylights*.

'Basically,' he explains, 'my job entails organising all the effects you see in the film – the pyrotechnics, explosions, bullets, guns. We also make up the gadgetry and gimmicks that one is accustomed to seeing in a Bond film, plus we do all the scale models.'

This means coordinating a 27-strong team of riggers, model-makers and technicians while plane-hopping around locations with the second unit. ('You wake up in the morning and you've got to check in your diary where you are before you get up.')





DAYLIGHTS

There's a new 007 film made every two years, so the Bond show has become a well-oiled machine in constant motion. John works on each film for about a year, starting as soon as the first draft of the script has been written.

I organise everything – explosions, bullets, guns, pyrotechnics

'They started writing the script for *The Living Daylights* toward the end of 1985. We started preparing the effects in early 1986 and then got into heavy preproduction around May 1986. Shooting started at the end of last August and we finished shooting in February of this year in time for its Royal Premiere on 29 June.

'And hopefully, please God, toward the end of this year they'll start writing the next one. And then next year we go through the same routine again.'

John and his team are given a rough outline of what the writers and director have in mind for SFX sequences – and then they're left to work out how to do it. And there are some big production numbers in *The Living Daylights* . . .

'The film opens with a very exciting sequence, a chase on the rock of Gibraltar – with parachutes and all sorts of things like that. There's then a fairly good fight sequence which takes place in a country house, with explosions, Molotov cocktails.

'Then there's a big rooftop chase sequence in Tangiers which involved quite a lot of effects rigs. And then there's the end sequence which, as far as we were concerned, seems to start about halfway through – that involved a big fight sequence, tanks, explosions and crashing aircraft. It's fairly well studded with effects!'

007's Aston Martin, last glimpsed being shot up with George Lazenby behind the wheel in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* almost 20 years ago, returns in *The Living Daylights* – with, of course, a few more gadgets. And among the car's adventures is a chase sequence on a frozen lake somewhere behind the Iron Curtain . . .

But John actually used three identical Aston Martins, each performing a different trick. The *Living Daylights* producers bought three second-hand models and commissioned Aston to bring them up to scratch before John and his team were let loose on them.

'We had to make the car do, or appear to do, the things that you'll see it do in the film. It deploys skis from the side to give it stability on snow and ice, it has tyres that have studs that automatically come out to give it traction, missiles that are fired from behind the fog lights, a head-up display on the windscreen, bulletproof glass all round and a rocket engine in the back to give it a little added oommff.'

All this but, alas, no ejector seat.

But despite these gimmicks, which are after all pretty standard for a Bond movie, John sees *The Living Daylights* as a return to the old style of Bond films – a return to the days before gadgetry took over.

'Like many films in the mid- and late Seventies the series went through a period when SFX seemed to be the be-all and end-all, which I think was a mistake because the public don't go to see a film just to see the SFX any more than they go just to see any other department's work, they go to see the film.

'With *The Living Daylights* we're getting back to the good story and the good acting and I think this could possibly be the closest there's been to, say, *From Russia With Love*, which is still my personal favourite.

'Timothy Dalton's a fine actor and excellent in the part. Before he started work on the film he read all of the Bond books from scratch and became something of a purist: he wanted to get back to the idea of Bond that Ian Fleming, the original author, had. And when it came to directing him for the SFX sequences he was just great, game for anything.'

John also had to brief Desmond Llewellyn's Q (Bond's secret-service equipment designer) on how to use the new gadgets, and Llewellyn is becoming something of a technobuff.

'He obviously has to know what he's doing,' says John, 'because he's invariably the one who's demonstrating it to Bond. He's great, he picks things up very quickly. We give him the gadgets and gimmicks and say 'Stand there Desmond, do this, pull that, turn that' – it all seems to work out fine.'

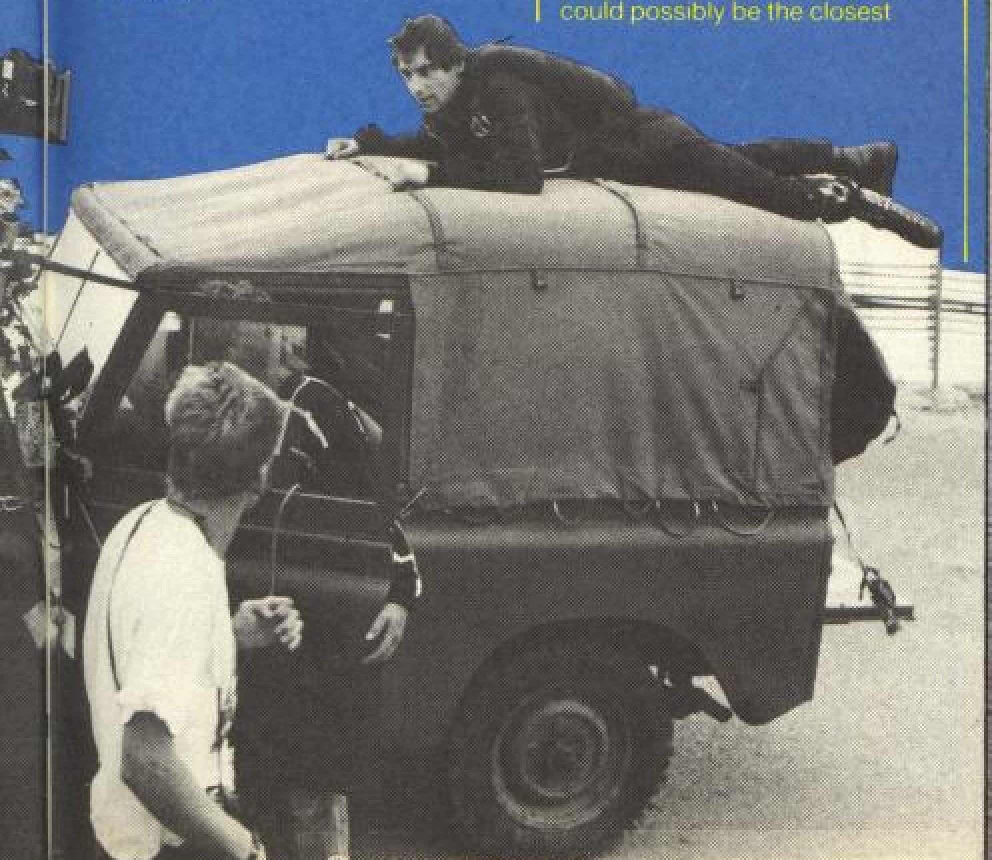
I wondered what John considered to be his most ambitious Bond SFX. He gazed skywards as he let out a slow sigh, and I'm sure I glimpsed a bead of cold sweat on his brow. The memory was clearly nightmarish . . .

'It has to be the airship sequence with the Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco in *A View To A Kill* – that was a very tough sequence to film. It was extremely difficult to get on the Golden Gate at *all* to shoot *anything*, and then to get an airship appearing to fly toward it and around the top gave us a hell of a lot of headaches.

'To make matters worse, the traffic on the bridge isn't stopped for *anything*, not even a James Bond film.

'I shot on the bridge for two days, but they would only let us up there for a weekend and then we had to be up there by five o'clock in the morning and be as unobtrusive as possible so the public weren't aware of us. At one point I had to set up a camera a hundred feet down one of the main cables from the top of the bridge, so you have to climb 746 feet and then climb out onto the main cable and then climb down the main cable and then set up the camera there.

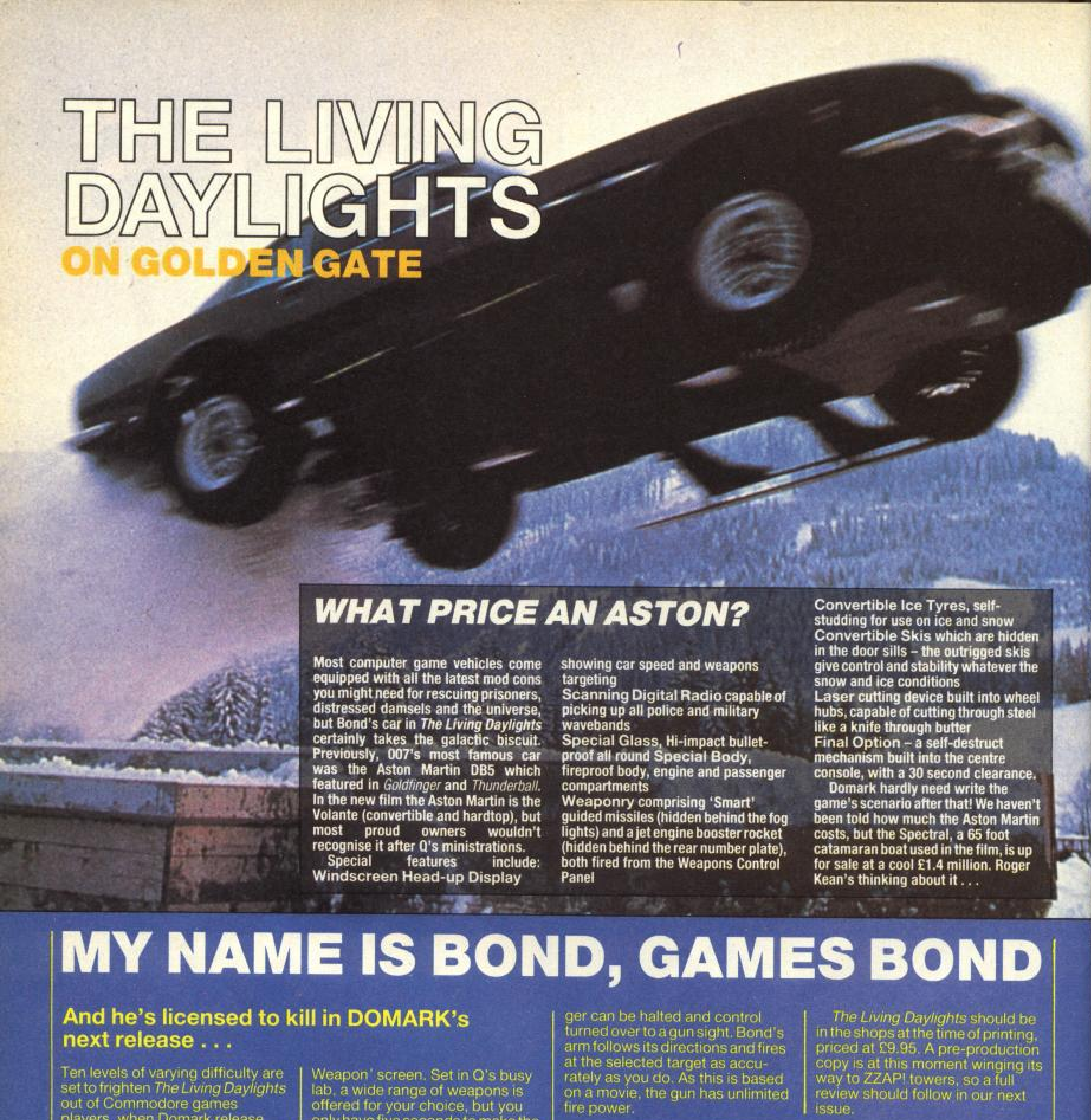
'It was tough! But it was worth all the aggro because it's a satisfying sequence to watch.'



THE BOND FILMS AND THE BONDS



1962 ***Dr No*** Sean Connery
1963 ***From Russia With Love*** Sean Connery
1964 ***Goldfinger*** Sean Connery
1965 ***Thunderball*** Sean Connery
1967 ***You Only Live Twice*** Sean Connery
1969 ***On Her Majesty's Secret Service*** George Lazenby
1971 ***Diamonds Are Forever*** Sean Connery
1973 ***Live And Let Die*** Roger Moore
1974 ***The Man With The Golden Gun*** Roger Moore
1977 ***The Spy Who Loved Me*** Roger Moore
1979 ***Moonraker*** Roger Moore
1982 ***For Your Eyes Only*** Roger Moore
1983 ***Octopussy*** Roger Moore
1984 ***Never Say Never Again*** Sean Connery
1985 ***A View To A Kill*** Roger Moore
1987 ***The Living Daylights*** Timothy Dalton



THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS
ON GOLDEN GATE

WHAT PRICE AN ASTON?

Most computer game vehicles come equipped with all the latest mod cons you might need for rescuing prisoners, distressed damsels and the universe, but Bond's car in *The Living Daylights* certainly takes the galactic biscuit. Previously, 007's most famous car was the Aston Martin DB5 which featured in *Goldfinger* and *Thunderball*. In the new film the Aston Martin is the Volante (convertible and hardtop), but most proud owners wouldn't recognise it after Q's ministrations.

Special features include:
Windscreen Head-up Display showing car speed and weapons targeting
Scanning Digital Radio capable of picking up all police and military wavebands
Special Glass, Hi-impact bullet-proof all round Special Body, fireproof body, engine and passenger compartments
Weaponry comprising 'Smart' guided missiles (hidden behind the fog lights) and a jet engine booster rocket (hidden behind the rear number plate), both fired from the Weapons Control Panel
Convertible Ice Tyres, self-studding for use on ice and snow
Convertible Skis which are hidden in the door sills – the outrigged skis give control and stability whatever the snow and ice conditions
Laser cutting device built into wheel hubs, capable of cutting through steel like a knife through butter
Final Option – a self-destruct mechanism built into the centre console, with a 30 second clearance.

Domark hardly need write the game's scenario after that! We haven't been told how much the Aston Martin costs, but the Spectral, a 65 foot catamaran boat used in the film, is up for sale at a cool £1.4 million. Roger Kean's thinking about it . . .

MY NAME IS BOND, GAMES BOND

And he's licensed to kill in DOMARK's next release . . .

Ten levels of varying difficulty are set to frighten *The Living Daylights* out of Commodore games players, when Domark release their second James Bond licensed game in mid-July. Programmed for the Commodore and Amiga by Sculptured Software of Salt Lake City (a company which greatly impressed Domark's Dominic Wheatley and Mark Strachan on their recent visit to the US), the game will be released simultaneously on most formats, with an arcade version due to appear under Mastertronic's Arcadia banner.

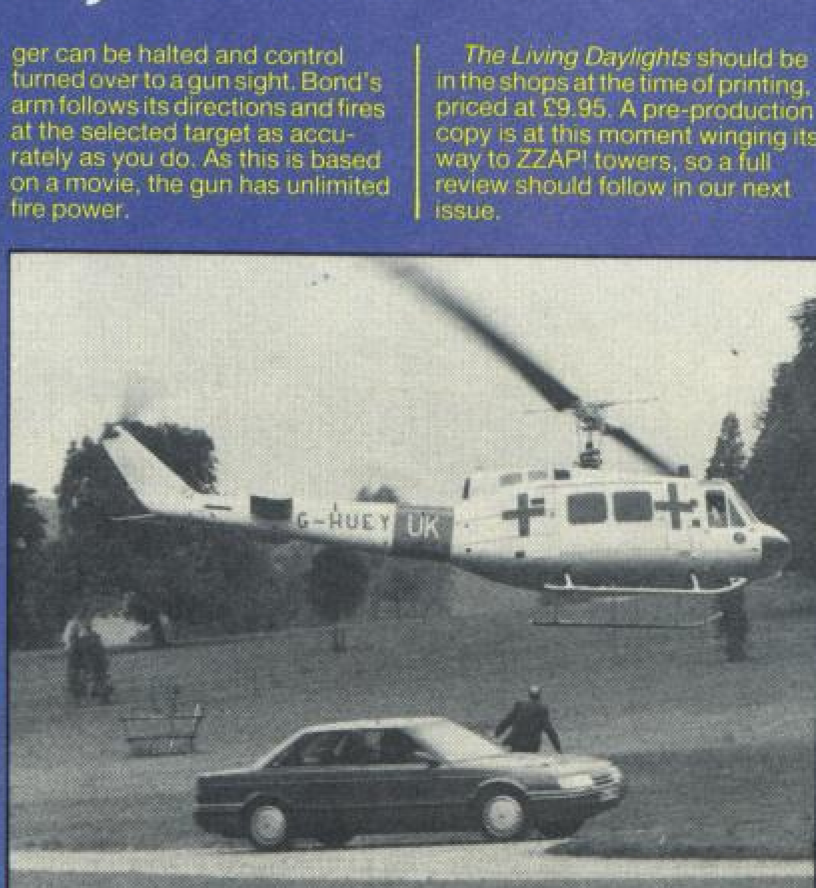
Each of the game's levels is set in a location taken from the film – Level One, for instance, is set in Gibraltar where Bond is on one of those pre-title exercises which leaves you wondering, is it possible the great James Bond has been killed? No, of course he hasn't, but in this section the SAS shoot at him from behind trees and he has to react quickly to avoid the 75 percent chance of being hit.

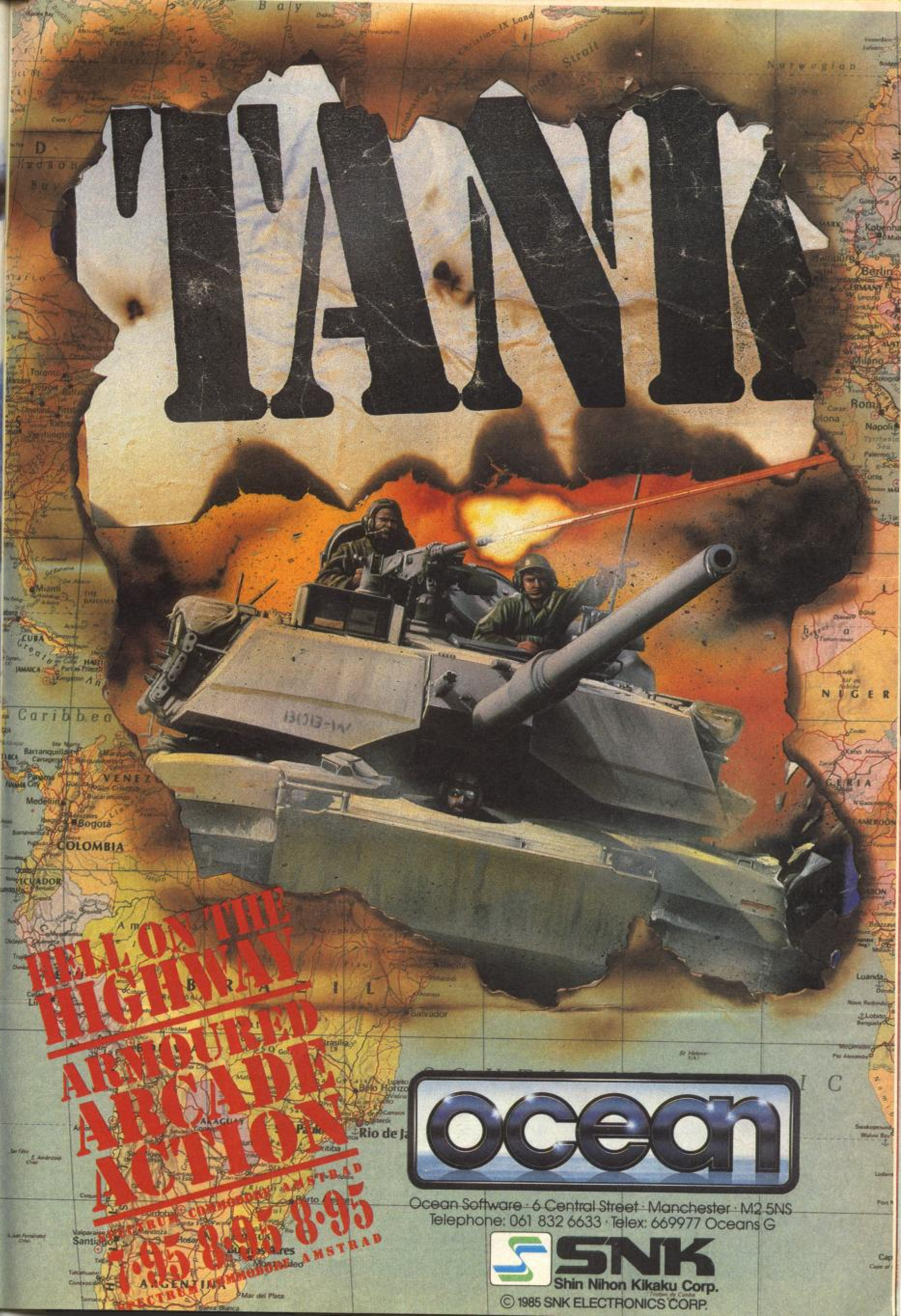
Levels are divided by a 'Choose Weapon' screen. Set in Q's busy lab, a wide range of weapons is offered for your choice, but you only have five seconds to make the decision as to which to take for the next level.

The play area consists of three horizontally scrolling sections. Bond moves along the central space, avoiding rocks and potholes, with the areas on either side scrolling at different speeds to create a parallax effect. The foreground comprises details of hedges and buildings, while Bond's protagonists lurk in the background. Apart from the SAS characters, there's a sniper in various guises and men who throw anything from bottles to knives.

While Bond concentrates on staying alive in this barrage, he's forced to leap over rocks or holes which loom up in his way, and at the same time dodge bombs hurled from low-flying helicopters above. Help in this ferocious firestorm is offered by means of dual joystick control. At appropriate moments the doughty 007 swagger can be halted and control turned over to a gun sight. Bond's arm follows its directions and fires at the selected target as accurately as you do. As this is based on a movie, the gun has unlimited fire power.

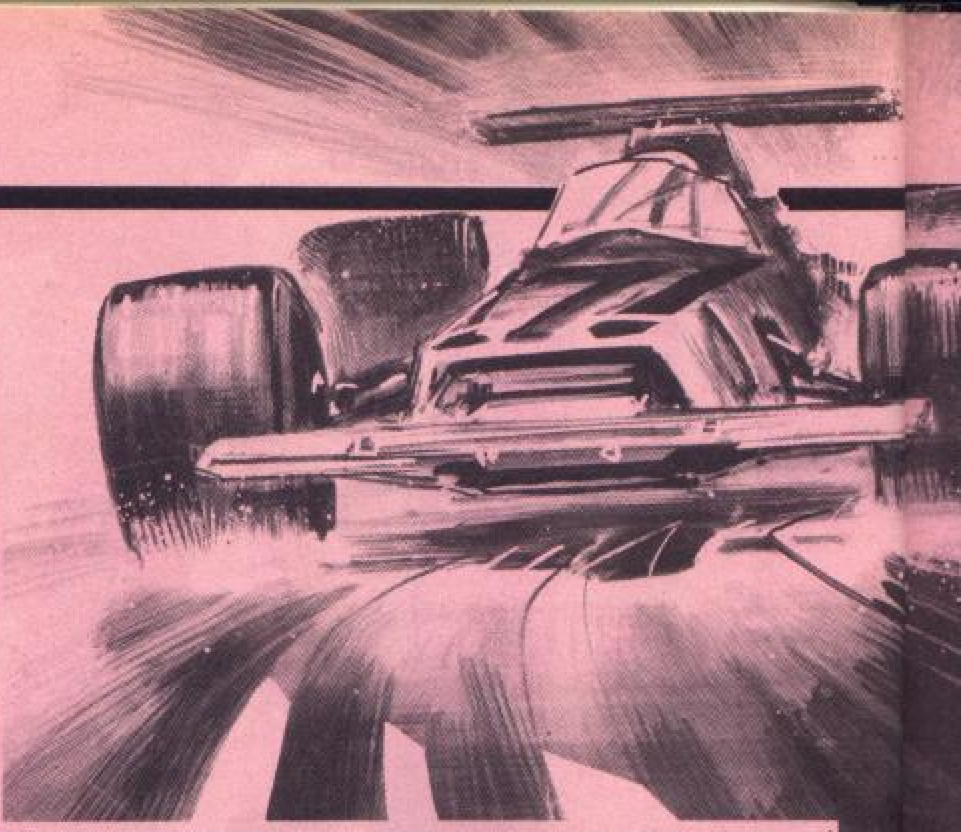
The Living Daylights should be in the shops at the time of printing, priced at £9.95. A pre-production copy is at this moment winging its way to ZZAP! towers, so a full review should follow in our next issue.




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REVS PLUS

Firebird, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, digital or analogue joystick, keys or paddles



Revs first appeared a couple of years back on the BBC, and was converted to the Commodore 64 in February of last year. It was met with almost universal acclaim, although some users complained about the lack of a digital joystick option – the program only allowed control via an analogue joystick, paddle controller or keyboard.

Now, a year an a half later, Geoff Crammond has taken his original program and enhanced it, adding an extra four tracks, a digital joystick option and 'computer aided steering'.

For the unitiated, *Revs Plus* is a simulator of the *Ralt 3 Toyota Novamotor*. 'Simulator' is the operative word – there's no 'climbing into the cockpit' and zooming off at silly speeds like most race games. The author has tried to get the program to react as much like a real car as possible, and although the computer car has no clutch and is tolerant to excessive over-revving, it requires plenty of practice before you can even corner properly.

The 'car' comes equipped with six gears (five forward and one reverse), brake, throttle, and adjustable aerilons.

The action is viewed from the driver's seat, with the cockpit controls at the screen bottom. The rev counter takes a central position, and is used in place of a speedometer – showing the power of the engine, rather than the car's velocity. Wing mirrors at the bottom left and right show approaching opponents during the race section.

Simulated practice and racing takes place over six famous tracks: Brands Hatch, Donnington Park, Nurburgring, Oulton Park, Silverstone, Snetterton – with only two loaded at any one time. The corners, hills and bumps of each circuit have been faithfully squeezed into the 64.

At the start there are two options: practice on an empty track, or race competition. The latter requires the negotiation of a series of qualifying laps in preparation for a race. The field contains 20 cars, with the speed of your qualifying lap affecting your grid position.

Should your car skid off the track or collide with another contestant, it returns to the track at the point of collision and has to be started up again. If another car is in the accident it is left on the track, and causes an obstruction throughout the rest of the race.



If you've ever wanted to become formula one racing driver – but could never persuade your bank manager or get sponsors – Revs Plus **offers you the chance you've been waiting for. It's a superb racing simulator which gives the player a real feeling of exhilaration. The graphics, although plain, give a real 3D effect, with the hills and bumps of each course uncannily 'felt' as you drive around. Even though the car is difficult to handle and takes an awful lot of practice to master, the program remains addictive – for me, a lot of the joy came when I completed my first lap without crashing. Buy this outstanding program if you've got any interest in motor racing.**



► The race is on, with only two competitors in front



► With five laps to go, it's wise to check the mirror for approaching vehicles



The technical achievement of *Revs Plus* is beyond debate, as the feeling of actually controlling a vehicle across a three-dimensional landscape is tremendous. This is especially true when considering that you are able to spin off the track, stall, restart, pull back onto the track and continue (even in the opposite direction if you are so inclined!). However, I found that the initial difficulty encountered in controlling the vehicle was more than a little offputting. It is hard to pigeonhole Revs Plus**: it is more than a racing game, but less than a true simulation. I enjoyed my few clear runs around the race-tracks of the world, but the novelty eventually wore off.**





An over-complicated array of actions and fiddly control method mars what could have been a superlative simulated racing car. True, it is supposed to represent the control of a sophisticated motorised vehicle and should therefore involve complex controls – but did they need to be this finnicky? Another problem is the sound, which is well below the standard set by the rest of the program – an almost apologetic little buzz takes the place of the engine's roar. Revs Plus is a genuinely absorbing and exciting product, but the level of practice necessary to even complete a single lap was too high for my liking.

PRESENTATION 93%
A nice loading system, a wealth of options and an informative and well-documented instruction manual.

GRAPHICS 92%
Plain, but giving a realistic 3D effect.

SOUND 32%
A poor engine whine, and a few ineffective white noises.

HOOKABILITY 76%
Difficult to control, even with the computer aided steering, but the urge to succeed should keep you at it.

LASTABILITY 85%
Six tracks to negotiate, with some stiff opposition to beat. There's also the thrill of trying to better your own lap record.

OVERALL 83%
An excellent racing simulation which provides a realistic challenge.

METROCROSS

US Gold, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

The latest in the long line of coin-op conversions to come '64-side is the Namco classic, *Metrocross*, the objective of which is to negotiate a series of floorways within a set time limit.

The quickest path is to keep to the chequered floor covering, as the green tiles reduce your speed by 75%. Hurdles are liberally dotted about, and must be dodged or jumped, as contact causes your player to go sprawling on the deck, therefore wasting valuable time. Rats also join in the proceedings, biting your shoulders and slowing you down – these pests are shaken off by moving quickly from side to side.

A variety of cans are found scattered about the floor, each with a different function according to its colour. Red Coke cans must be jumped over, blue cans are kicked to gain a bonus score, and green cans double your speed.

Speed is also increased by riding on skateboards which are provided along the way, and certain obstacles are cleared completely by use of the springboards which are dotted around. Jumping from these sends your player somersaulting rapidly across the floor, thus clearing any hazards in his path.

Each of the 24 levels has a separate time limit, displayed by a disappearing bar at the bottom of the screen. Only one life is provided, so fail to finish a level and it's back to square one.



In essence, Metrocross is a very simple racing game with unusual obstacles tacked on, similar in many ways to a horizontally scrolling Trailblazer. It's quite enjoyable, but somehow misses out on a certain something to set it apart from the rest. It has one or two bad points, including the annoying delay between games (over 20 seconds) and the dreadful music. I suppose that this is a reasonable conversion from the arcades – it's a pity that it's not a bit cheaper though.



The arcade game isn't exactly a household name, and when playing this it's not difficult to see why. Running along the rather bland horizontally scrolling landscape is entertaining for a while, but the unchanging backdrops, repetitive gameplay and long pauses in the action eventually repel. If it was cheaper, Metrocross wouldn't be a bad investment, but there's not enough action or variety to justify its ten pound price tag.



Although billed as a game for people who can 'think in micro-seconds not minutes', this particular facet isn't terribly useful when the main character doesn't move that rapidly anyway. It tends to be a game where remembering the layout of the screen is as important as being able to think quickly – this is alright for a while, but all too quickly becomes boring. As racing games go, Metrocross isn't exactly the state of the art, and although it does have some strange addictive quality I don't think I'll be returning to it very much.

PRESENTATION 41%
A fiddly high-score table and annoying delays throughout.

GRAPHICS 59%
Simplistic graphics and animation which do no more than serve their function.

SOUND 28%
A grating tune and weak spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 79%
The straightforward running and jumping action is immediately enjoyable.

LASTABILITY 59%
There are 24 similar levels to beat if you're prepared to stick at it.

OVERALL 53%
A good conversion of a none-too-inspiring arcade game.

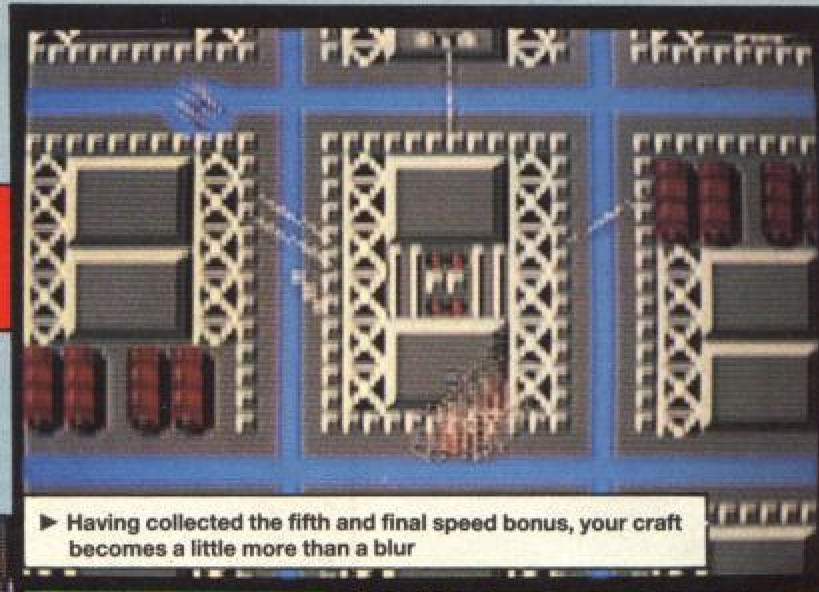
▶ With a quarter of the course remaining, time runs out for the boy racer



ZZAP! TEST

SLAP FIGHT

Imagine, £8.95 cass, joystick only



► Having collected the fifth and final speed bonus, your craft becomes a little more than a blur

A once pleasant world, Orac, is now a planet under siege, as evil aliens have claimed it as their own. On a one-man mission to oblivion, you pilot the latest Slapfighter in a do-or-die mission against the alien swarm.

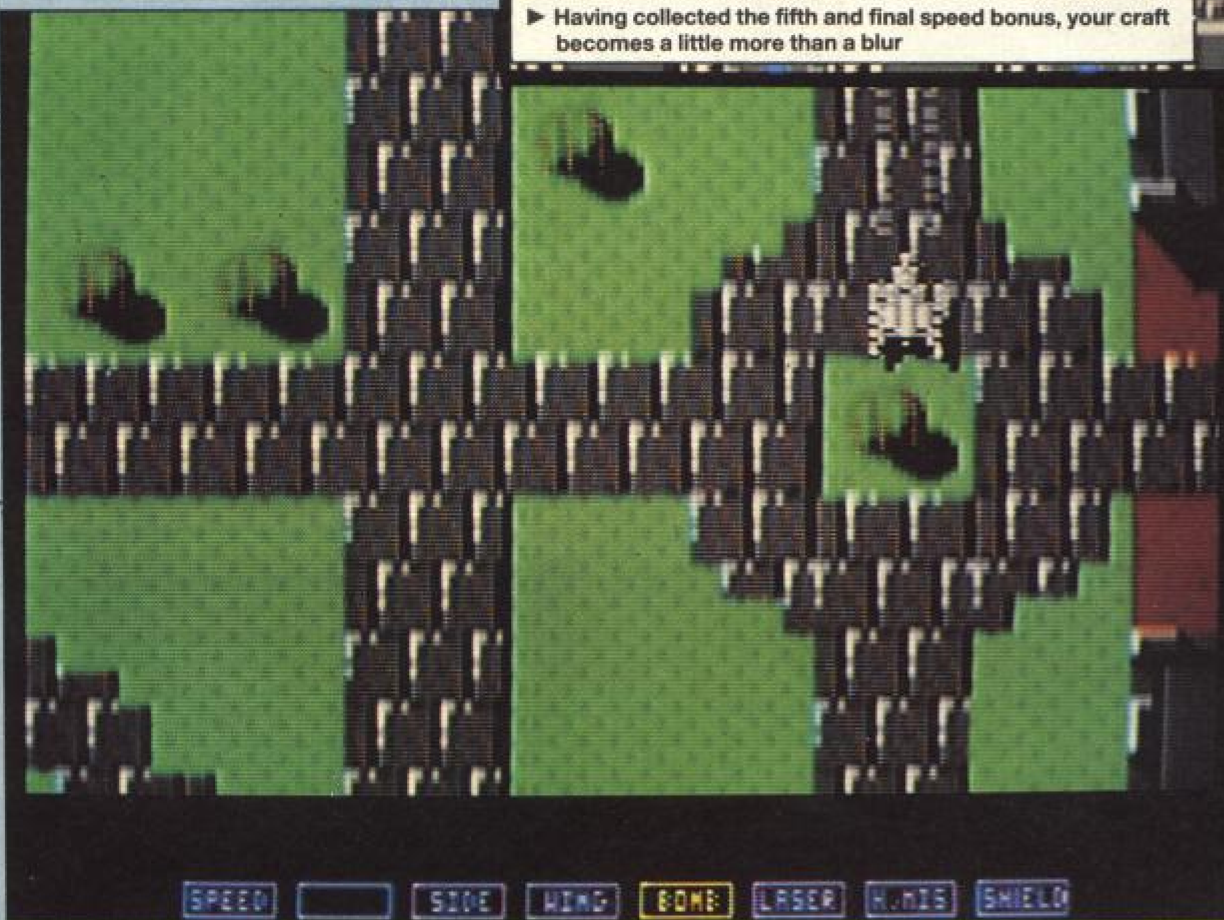
The surface of Orac vertically scrolls beneath, while you run the gauntlet of its new inhabitants. As you cut a swathe of destruction through the alien forces, certain craft and buildings release a yellow star. Collect this, and the first of a series of eight icons is highlighted. As further stars are collected, the next in the sequence is lit and so on.

Each icon represents an additional feature, armament or equipment. Extra Speed is the first to be gathered, followed by the option of adding Side Lasers, Wing Extensions (increasing your rate of fire), a Forward Firing Bombing System, a Front-Mounted Laser, Homing Missiles and Shields. The Speed and Wings icons have to be accessed five and three times respectively to benefit from their full effect. Some items are less effective against certain areas of the alien defences, so the second icon in the series is used to switch back to normal shot.

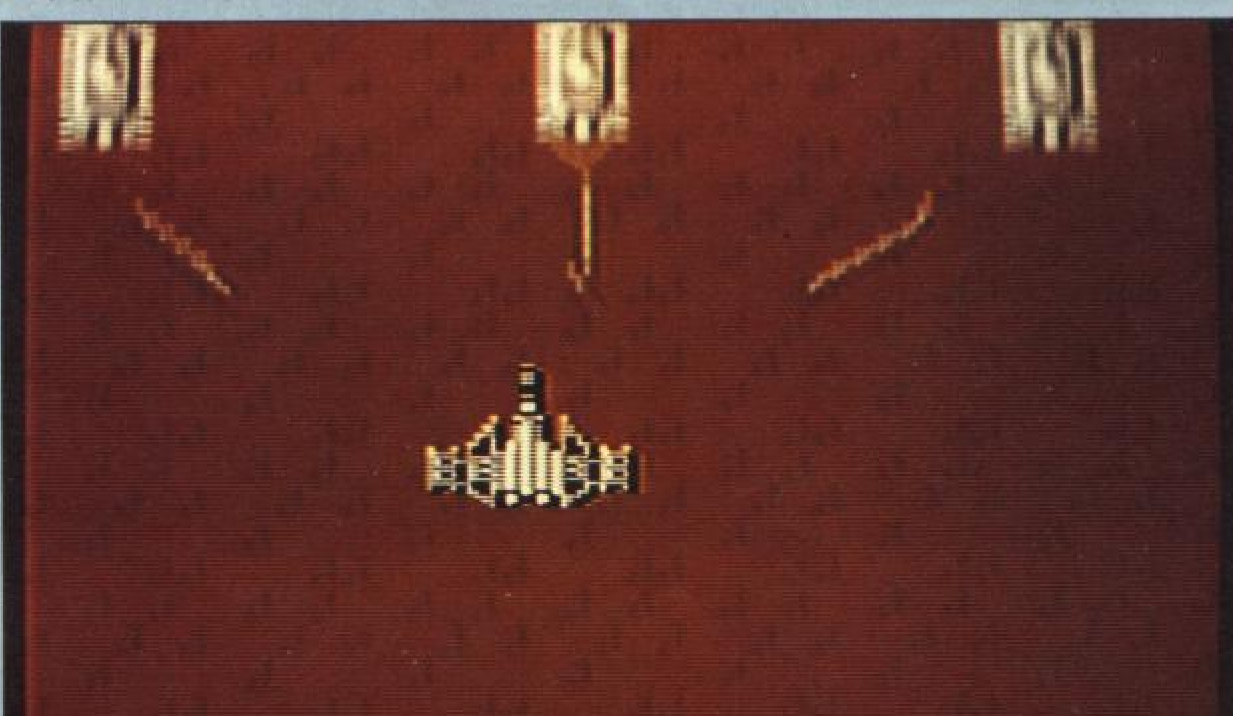
Specific items of equipment have a cumulative effect, for instance the wing extensions increase the firing rate for the homing missiles, but have no effect on the lasers.

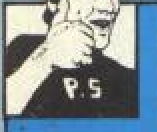
Colliding with one of the alien vessels or failing to avoid a hail of bullets, results in the explosion of your Slapfighter. When this happens, all the armament gathered and the icons collected are forfeit, leaving you with the Slapfighter in the default state.

▼ Zooming across the surface of Orac with no opposition in sight



▼ Equipped with wing extensions and deadly homing missiles, you're a real force to be reckoned with





A coin-op conversion that's almost as good as the original is something that we don't see very often in the ZZAP! office, so it's a pleasure to see a game such as this. Slap Fight **can't be faulted, the graphics, sound, and gameplay are all there – and they're all very good. The action gets extremely frenetic, and it's often very difficult to cope with everything that's going on. For this reason, selecting an extra weapon in the midst of flight is very likely to get you killed (the office solution to this problem is to put a joystick on the floor and crunch it with your foot to select extra equipment . . . patent – J Rignall). This is one for the Zappers' collection.**



For some reason I appear to be the only person in the office with reservations about this one. I can see the appeal – it's beautifully programmed, looks good and plays smoothly, it's just that it offers nothing new. There's a distinct pattern to the alien attack waves, and failing to collect the required amount of stars before the screen fills with bullets leads to almost certain destruction. Slap Fight is one of those games that I can take to a certain level and no further, which is something that makes me very frustrated. Having said all that, this is a good buy for fans of the type.



I'm always keen on a good bit of spriticide to liven up a quiet afternoon, and Slap Fight is quite simply the best vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up that has made its weary way to the ZZAP! offices for a long time. The graphics are excellent, containing loads of depth and plenty of detail. The alien forces are also quite smart and move around smoothly, although some of the larger aliens tend to glitch slightly. The merry tune that jingles along during play hardly matches the atmosphere of mayhem and destruction, and switching to 'effects only' is no improvement, being a series of high-pitched squawks and squeaks. Good fun though, and plenty to keep you stuck to your TV for a couple of weeks.

PRESENTATION 58%
Lack of restart, pause and two player mode, usually present on games of this type.

GRAPHICS 81%
Beautiful backdrops and realistic alien craft make Slap Fight look really good.

SOUND 59%
A jolly, but ill-suited tune during play, and weak spot effects. Good loading track though.

HOOKABILITY 70%
Initial difficulty is eased by the collection of extra armaments.

LASTABILITY 82%
Plenty of Orac to infiltrate and loads of aliens to slaughter.

OVERALL 80%
A superb arcade conversion and a great shoot 'em up in its own right.

RASTERSCAN

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Having been on the losing side in a huge intergalactic punch-up, the good ship *Rasterscan* has been left crippled. It is currently in serious danger of being sucked into the heart of a nearby star, and consequently becoming a large cloud of metal vapour.

'MSB', the one and only maintenance robot left aboard has also suffered damage, and can only remember how to fix toasters. It is your task, to guide MSB around the ship, helping him to perform four repair jobs, and ultimately regain control of the spaceship.

Initially, the generator is out of commission and the ship is running on battery power alone. To get the generator working again, you have to track down the break in its fuel line and replace the damaged section with one from the stock which exists somewhere on board.

Once the ship is under its own power, you can then attempt to activate the ship's four engines, by re-connecting power lines (as with the generator's fuel line) and initiating the correct switches.

Safely under way once more, the ship's guidance systems now require activation. The main scanner is turned on by the correct sequential activation of three switches, and a room near the bridge contains the main control system. Here, MSB is used to allocate power to each of the four engines, effectively enabling the ship to be steered to safety.

MSB's task is made more difficult by the fact that many of the rooms are accessed by large metal doors, secured with a system of colour-coded locks. The switch takes the form of an octagonal display with eight coloured segments. Altering the colour of one segment also affects others (like a two-dimensional Rubik's Cube), with the door opening when all the segments have been turned to the correct colour.



What annoyed me most about this was the control method – The MSB responds very sluggishly, making the exploration of the ship annoying and time-consuming. It's a shame really, because the logic puzzles are superb – they really get the grey matter whirring into action. The graphics and sound are of commendable quality and there are plenty of puzzles and obstacles to overcome, but personally I found the gameplay too frustrating and tiresome to be worth the effort.



On first playing this, I thought it was incredibly frustrating and soon left it. However, on returning I found that it did have some strange appeal and eventually became quite engrossed. The control of MSB is very fiddly, and the logic puzzles are *really* hard – it took me absolutely ages to suss out the locks. That's no guarantee that you will have difficulty (I'm no genius), but you'll certainly have to slave over them for the first couple of goes. Rasterscan has some pretty graphics and the gameplay is fairly novel, but the task ahead is a bit awesome – be prepared for a challenge.

PRESENTATION 75%
A useful game save option and a generally smart look.

GRAPHICS 63%
Large bland areas decorated with small, detailed and well-drawn objects.

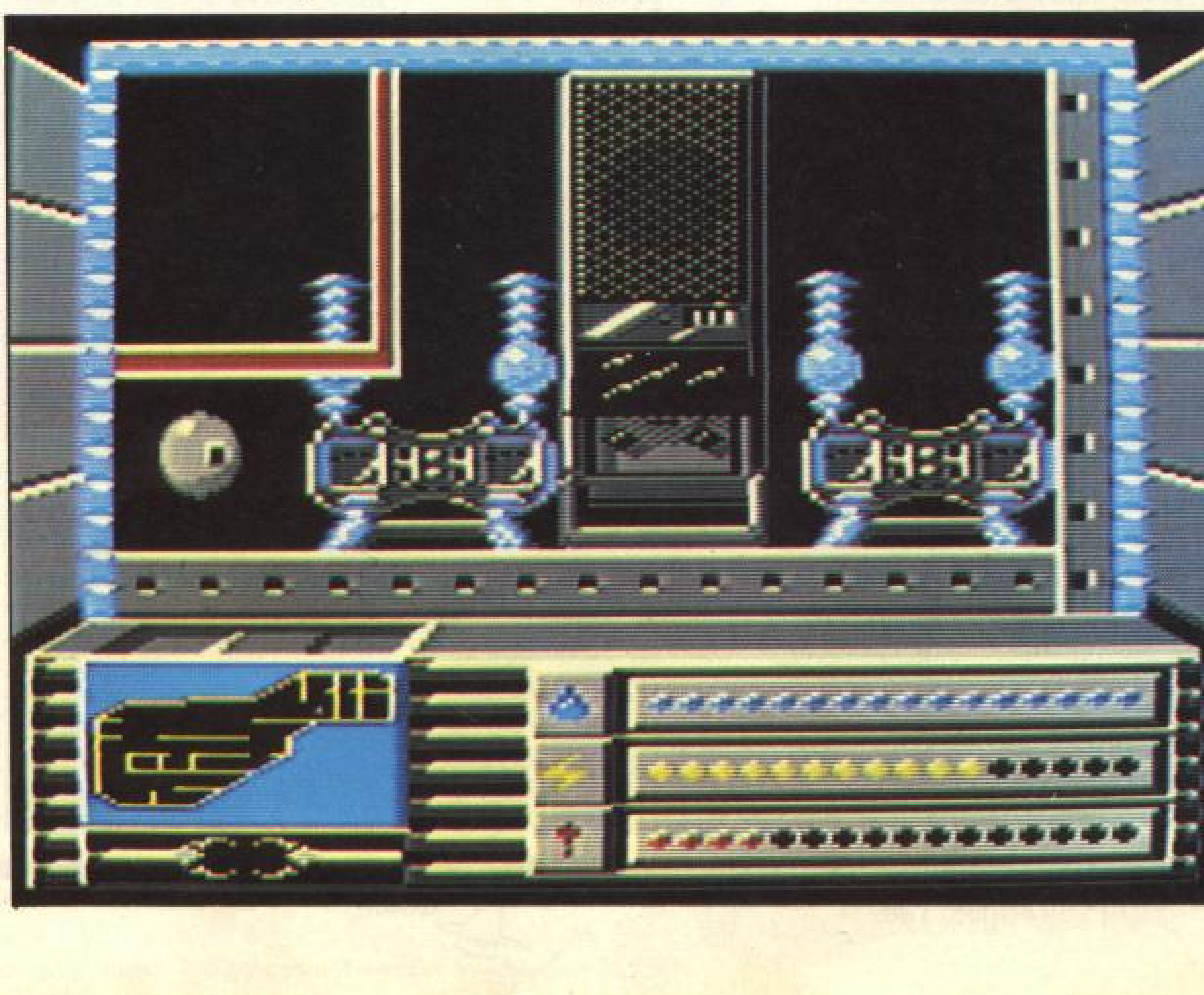
SOUND 76%
An unusual but pleasant tune provides atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 49%
The awkward control method and complexity of the logic puzzles are a detracting factor to the first-time player.

LASTABILITY 62%
A daunting task lies ahead for those who enjoy this of action.

OVERALL 67%
An imaginative and perplexing (but sometimes frustrating) arcade adventure.

► This unusual screen set-up is used to initiate the save game option



WIZ

Melbourne House, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

The Magical Isle is a mysterious place; home to Wizards and Magicians, it is rich with the magical power released from four special rune stones. All is not well though – at places throughout the island the parallel worlds of Light and Dark touch, allowing evil from the Dark side to spill over into the Light.

The Council of Wizards have chosen to do nothing about this. It would be easy enough to separate the two worlds, but two of the four stones from which they draw their power lie on the Dark side. Severing the worlds would mean the loss of their power – something which the Council are loathe to risk.

Seeing the Wizards' vision clouded by their greed for power, you decide to begin the task of becoming a Fifth grade Wizard, hoping to eventually attain the power to separate the two worlds for ever.



The concept behind Wiz is fairly novel, but its implementation leaves an lot to be desired. It's extremely unwieldy, and the control method is awful – once again the use of the space bar to access the spell modes is very annoying. The scrolling is slow and jerky and the characters are simplistic and ineffective. The Wizard's movement is also sluggish, and a major point against it is the fact that the joystick must be centralised between each movement – horrible!



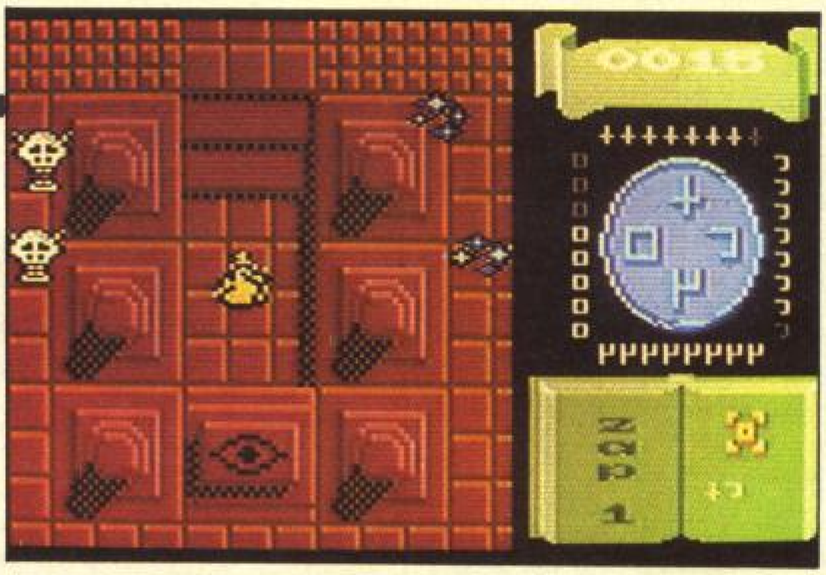
Limping into the ZZAP! offices comes the latest Gauntlet **clone, and what a tragedy it is. The programmers have obviously put a lot of thought into the scenario, but the only result of this effort is a very confusing set of instructions. It's a shame that a little more work didn't go into the graphics – the unimaginative backdrops and poorly drawn sprites look amateurish, and the incredibly jerky scrolling isn't the sort of thing you expect to see these days. Joystick control is sluggish too, and accessing the 'spell book' constantly interrupts the flow of play. Who'd pay nine pounds for this? I wouldn't.**

The screen displays an overhead view of your quest, with a panel to the right delivering information about the spells in your possession.

Four modes of operation are available: in 'Move and Cast' you move North, South, East or West through scrolling screens of open country or paved town pathways. A red medallion on the right shows your current direction.

Your anti-evil shield has been revoked by the Council of Wizards, making you vulnerable to energy-sapping attacks from the creatures which have infiltrated the land. You have limited power (shown at the top right of the screen), which is reduced further by spell-casting or collision with evil entities: the more dangerous the creature the greater the drain, with death resulting from a total power loss. Power returns gradually if left alone, however this process can be speeded up by zapping evil beasts – the more evil the creature, the greater the increase.

On entering 'Prepare Spell' mode, the medallion becomes blue, and the four rune symbols are displayed. When selected in the correct order, the rune sequence generates a spell according to the corresponding sequence in your spell book. After selection, runes are removed from your stock, and appear in the scroll above the medallion.



▶ A Wiz can't even concoct a spell these days without the unwanted attentions of deadly bovine skulls



Playing Wiz **is a total waste of time, as even completing the first level takes tedium to a new level – I don't find any fun in trudging slowly around a poorly drawn play area shooting helpless creatures. There's absolutely no challenge, and, obtaining the spells is far too easy. The graphics and sound are really pathetic and the high price is a joke. Why can't Melbourne House go back to releasing good stuff like** Exploding Fist **– this is just a travesty.**

The 'Rune Spell' not only destroys enemies, but also causes them to leave behind a rune which remains for a short period, and must be collected within this time. Collecting runes in this way replenishes your stocks.

Two rune types are obtainable from the Light side, with the other two hidden in the dark. To enter the dark side, the correct 'Dark Spell' must first be discovered.

In the 'Read Spell' mode the medallion changes to grey, with three markers corresponding to pages of a spell book which can contain up to 20 spells.

In the final 'Buy Spell Mode', the medallion turns purple with up to four different symbols. When a Wizard is on screen this mode displays the spells he is qualified to teach. Each can be previewed in the spell book, where the power requirements and necessary Wizard level are also displayed. Attempting to buy a spell with insufficient power results in death.

PRESENTATION 40%
A poor on-screen layout complemented by confusing instructions.

GRAPHICS 41%
Amateurish sprites set against jerky scrolling backdrops.

SOUND 58%
A moderately interesting soundtrack and decent, if sparse, spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 39%
Initially difficult, due to the confusing instructions and unwieldy control method.

LASTABILITY 27%
There's a fair amount of depth, but the poor presentation and unrewarding gameplay result in very little entertainment.

OVERALL 33%
Another interesting idea which completely fails in its implementation.

▶ Another pleasant stroll in the country is interrupted for our charming hero





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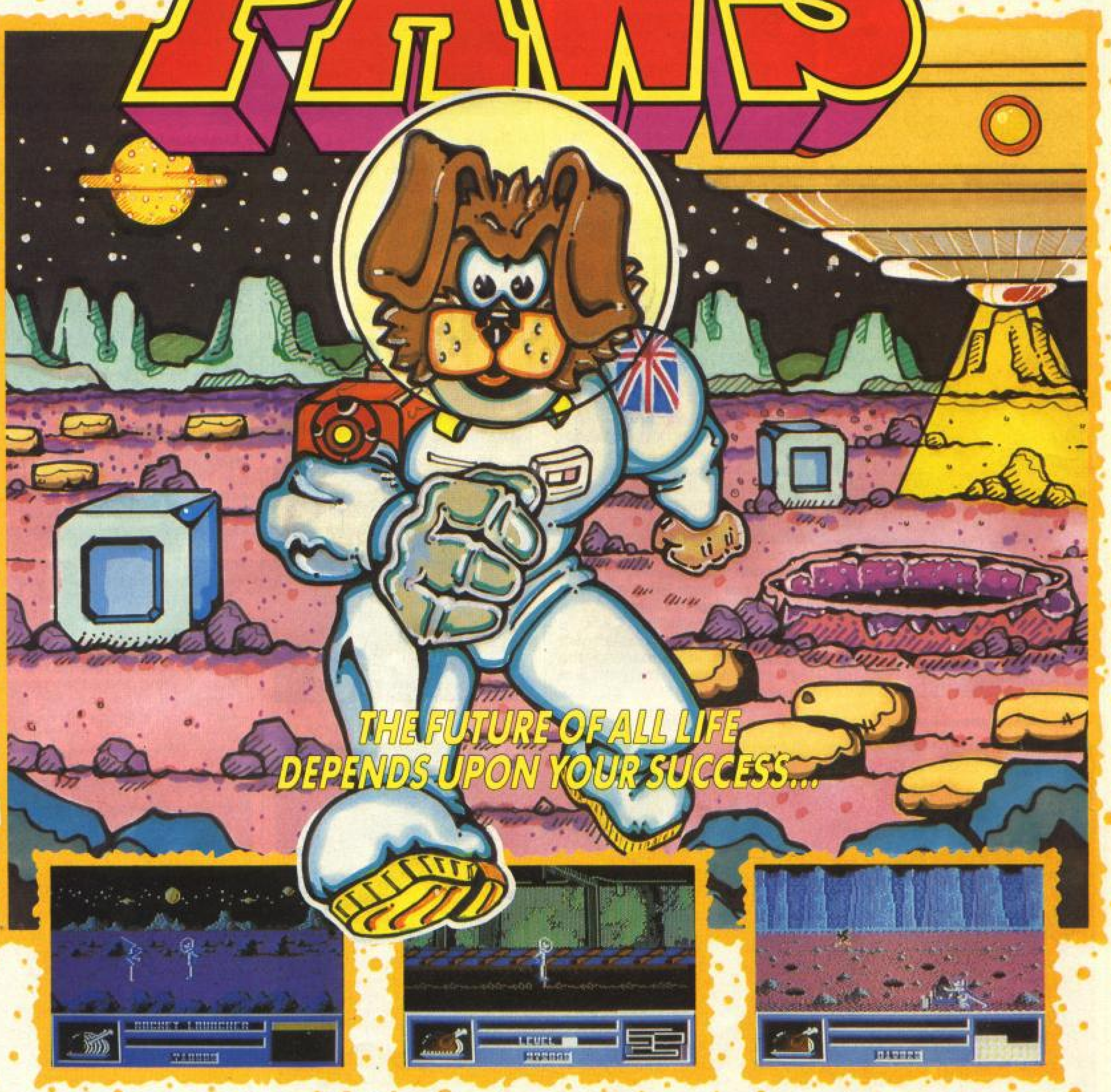
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On the moon of a distant planet, a gang of unscrupulous mercenaries have been secretly breeding the Tasty Space Griffin and plan to flood the market with them, thus destablising the monetary system of the entire universe, and allowing them to seize power.

Starfleet command intended to send Captain Neil Armstrong to destroy this evil plot, but due to an error on the notoriously unreliable series seven astro-telex, our hero, Captain Rover Pawstrong has been sent instead. Vastly inexperienced and totally unsuited for the task, Captain Pawstrong's mission is to capture or destroy every one of the Tasty Space Griffins.

You control his movements as he scours the planet, above and below ground, aided only by the occasional visit of a scout craft, dropping off essential supplies...

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ZZAP! TEST

FALCON

Virgin Games, £9.95 cass, joystick only

When man first invented time travel, he never really realised the full extent of the dangers which would accompany it. To counteract these dangers, an agency was needed to watch over the time-lines and the people who use them. TIME is such an agency.

Usually, TIME agents patrol the time-lines, making sure that no-one meddles with events or inadvertently alters the course of history. On this occasion, however, your mission is to follow in the path of a renegade TIME agent who is intent on causing disruptions in the space-time continuum, by travelling up and down the time-lines and switching artefacts between different zones. If left unchecked, these chronologically misplaced artefacts can cause colossal disturbances across time, resulting in the large-scale destruction of time periods and having dire consequences for mankind.



Falcon's graphics are really well presented, with the flick-screen backdrops deserving a special mention. Unfortunately, they only flatter to deceive, as the game itself is repetitive and fairly uninteresting. The idea can be reduced to a basic search-and-replace theme, which soon palls and becomes tiresome due to its inherent simplicity. Falcon may appeal to the jaded arcade adventurers – but not for long.

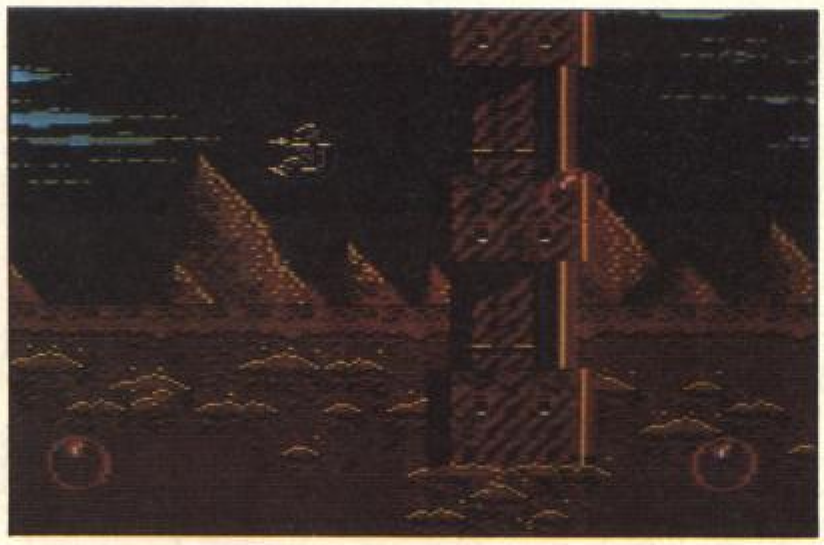


If you're into infuriating gameplay, sluggish characters and unwieldy menu systems then Falcon is the game for you. However, like most other 64 owners, I like a little more in the way of polish and general playability. The time zone inhabitants are pretty deadly, so hunting down and collecting objects proves to be difficult. The database gives plenty of background about the mission, but it doesn't tell exactly what should be done – and a couple of reads is often necessary. After giving this some hefty playing I've come to the conclusion that Falcon boasts some pretty graphics but not a lot of game.

As a Timelord, the agent cannot be killed, but it is your task to reverse the damage he has done and thwart his plans by finding and replacing the offending artefacts.

You begin your mission in the Eiger vault, headquarters of TIME, having just boarded your time craft, the 'Falcon's Wing'. The ship is part controlled by CAIN: a Cybernetic Artificially Intelligent Nexus, which runs many of the higher functions of the craft and enables you to access the vital controls via a menu system.

'Database' gives useful information about residents and artefacts to be found in the time-period, and also gives notice when any disturbances have been detected. Choosing 'Time Zones' enables you to select your proposed temporal destination and following the time warp. 'Exit' allows you to leave the ship.



► Deep in the future our hero scours the Ascension landscape



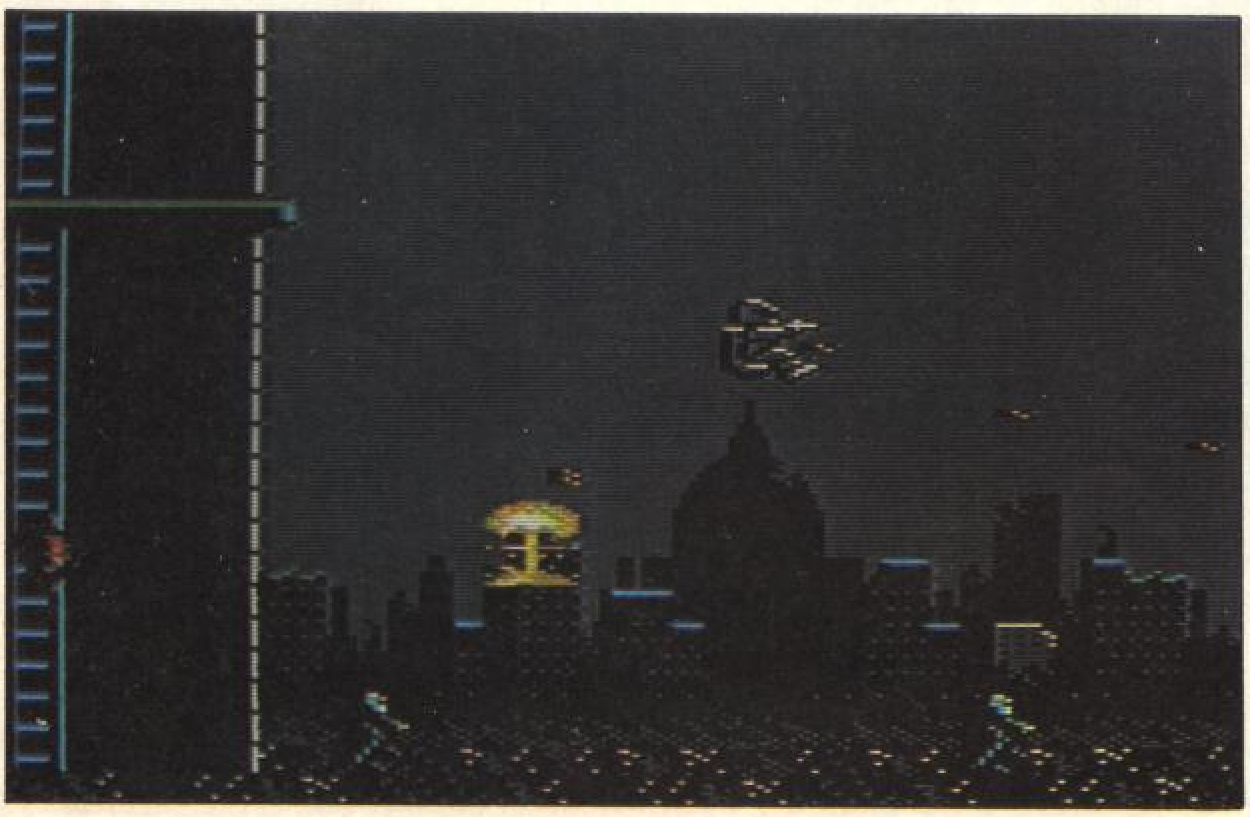
Although basically a simple 'pick up and drop' game, Falcon is actually quite difficult. The action is fairly straightforward, being a mixture of shooting, picking up and dropping off, but actually achieving the objective is made difficult due to the hostile enemy and the very tight ten minute time limit. The in-game presentation and graphics are superb, but I found the action far too frustrating and unrewarding to be worth persevering with. Perhaps an avid arcade adventurer would think otherwise?

Equipped with a rapid-response laser gun and a jet-pack, you explore the time zone in order to discover any artefacts. When found, these are picked up simply by walking over them and pressing the fire button. Only one object may be carried at a time however, so once collected, the artefact must be immediately replaced in its correct chronological position.

In each time-zone you are attacked by the inhabitants of the era. These can be destroyed, and extra powers collected by picking up the tokens which appear at intervals. 'Power of will' momentarily immobilises the enemies, and 'Thinkstrike' temporarily renders you impervious to injury.

You only have a limited amount of time in each zone, and your stamina is reduced by hits from the enemy. If it becomes severely depleted you are returned to the Falcon's Wing and a time penalty is incurred. The mission ends when your stamina is reduced completely, or when the time limit for the mission is over-run.

► Jet-packing above a war-torn London, the intrepid TIME agent continues his mission



PRESENTATION 68%
Limited options, although the smart on-screen presentation deserves mention.

GRAPHICS 84%
Beautiful backdrops which are badly let down by the poor sprites.

SOUND 55%
Unusual sound effects and music.

HOOKABILITY 78%
Suss out the difficult menu system and it becomes more playable.

LASTABILITY 45%
The urge to continue disappears when all of the time-zones have been visited.

OVERALL 49%
An average attempt at a not entirely original concept.



► Equipped with go-faster legs, Mag Max is ready to face the world

MAG MAX

Imagine, £8.95, joystick or keys

A race of aliens are attacking Earth, and the only thing between them and victory is a team of five Mag Max war droids. Unfortunately, the bulk of their armament has been scattered around the landscape, leaving the heroic robots initially weak.

The action is set over a one-way horizontally scrolling landscape covered with gun emplacements and obstacles. Attacking craft appear from the right, homing in and firing deadly missiles. Contact with any alien device spells doom, and another member of the team moves in to take up the fight.

The lost armaments appear at regular intervals offering extra capabilities, including greater speed, firepower and shields. These are picked up when touched, and lost when a hit is sustained.

Portals to an underground passageway also appear regularly, and are used to descend to the alien-infested depths where the battle continues. Max uses an elevator to return to the surface when the going gets too hot.

When enough alien craft have been destroyed, their two-headed laser-spitting leader appears. This has to be destroyed if Max is to continue to victory.



Mag Max contains nothing original, it's very repetitive and holds no lasting interest. It's quite obvious that very little time has been spent on the presentation, as basic things such as clearing the joystick buffer and the fact that the restore key crashes the game should have been spotted during playtesting. The final straw is the use of colour, which offends the eyes and gives an immediate excuse to stop playing.



You might get some entertainment out of Mag Max **– that is if you can get past the invisible aliens and the built-in bomb-out which crashes the program every ten minutes. The graphics are fairly weak, but the game doesn't usually run long enough for them to become a problem. The gameplay complements the graphics perfectly, and a nice option is the use of 'restore', which crashes the program completely, saving you the hassle of continuing. If you fancy a shoot 'em up this month, go for the infinitely superior** Slap Fight.



One minute Imagine are releasing brilliant products such as Arkanoid **and** Slap Fight, **the next they're putting out rubbish like** Mag Max. **The presentation is thoughtless, and features such as the invisible aliens, frequent lock-outs and emplacements which only half blow up are not the sort of things you'd expect to find in a professional product. The graphics are equally thoughtless, and the playability and feel are very poor.**

PRESENTATION 39%
Generally adequate, but marred by the profusion of bugs.

GRAPHICS 38%
Combines a poor 3D effect with unimaginative sprites and use of colour.

SOUND 67%
The title tune is quite pleasant, and the spot effects work reasonably well.

HOOKABILITY 66%
Straightforward blasting action which is a doddle to get into.

LASTABILITY 35%
The frustration caused by the bugs and crashes is heightened by the repetitive gameplay.

OVERALL 39%
A very poor, bug-ridden and unentertaining arcade conversion.

FORCE ONE

Firebird, £1.99 cass, joystick only

Deep in space a Federation cargo ship has come under heavy attack from alien fighters. Survivors of the doomed freighter are attempting to reach safety by using the ship's escape pods, but these are also being fired upon by the unscrupulous aliens.

As the pilot of the nearest Federation vessel capable of dealing with the alien threat, the job of protecting the escapees falls to you and your vessel – Force One.

The screen takes a side view of the proceedings with your ship flying from left to right, across a scrolling backdrop of twinkling stars. Waves of alien fighters attack in an attempt to end your mission of mercy – these are either avoided or blown to bits.

An on-screen message warns of the approach of each escape pod so that you can avoid blasting it by mistake. Allowing the pod to safely leave the screen awards you with a bonus score, and the Force One changes colour – a signal that you have reached the next level.

Contact with alien vessels or the pods themselves results in the destruction of your ship, with your mission continuing until your three lives have been used up.



Although a complete rip-off of every horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up known to man (and a pretty bland one at that), Force One **is in fact quite playable. The attacking alien ships are quite smart, and some of the wave formations are pretty devious as well. One major gripe is the fact that once an alien vessel has bit the dust, the remaining dust can bite back: running into a cloud of vapour proves fatal. This is annoying at first, but soon becomes part of the game and is easily overcome by some nifty flying.** Force One **isn't exactly the state of the art in 64 programming, but it kept me amused – for a while, anyway.**



Shoot 'em ups don't come any simpler than this, as Force One **is basically a variant on the first level of** Sanxion. **Alien ships whizz in from the right, you shoot them . . . and that's it! There aren't any extra weapons to pick up, or motherships, or bonus screens – just waves and waves of alien ships which keep on coming until you die. The graphics are quite pretty – but there's little else of note.**

► The 'pod alert' message signals the arrival of an allied escape pod



PRESENTATION 72%
Smart on-screen look, with a pause and restart for good measure.

GRAPHICS 51%
Basic sprites and a pretty starfield, but little else.

SOUND 23%
No music and a simple 'swish' on the destruction of a ship.

HOOKABILITY 58%
Incredibly simplistic shooting action which is easy to pick up and play.

LASTABILITY 43%
Though slightly tedious, it's challenging enough to keep a fan of mindless shoot 'em ups amused for a short while.

OVERALL 48%
The shoot 'em up reduced to its simplest form.



HADES NEBULA

Nexus, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

Many moons ago, in a desperate attempt to seek out new energy supplies, the Earth despatched ten colony ships to a distant corner of the Universe on a reconnaissance mission.

On the less-than-pleasant planet of Sodini, the evil Emperor, Hades, got wind of these plans and decided to ambush the fleet, capture the people on board and sell off the colony vessels for scrap.

Due to a computer malfunction, colony vessel seven arrived at its destination two years ahead of schedule. Deciding to continue with their mission regardless, the colonists headed into the nearby Orion Nebula and found, much to their surprise, that it had been renamed 'Hades Nebula', and the entire Hadian fleet was lying there in preparation for the impending attack.

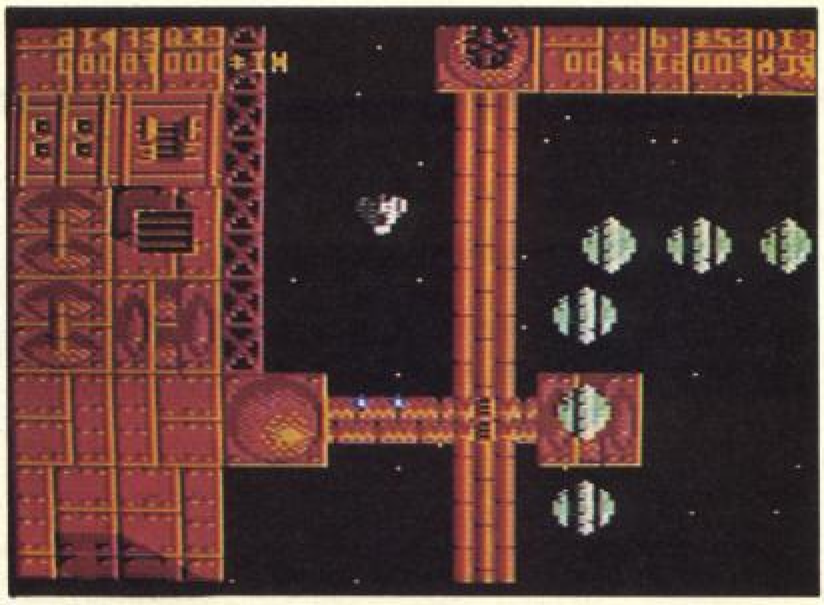
It is now the present day; a last ditch effort to save the rest of the colonists is being launched by a single, one man fighter against the entire fleet. There is room aboard for only one brave person, so taking the controls you fly off into the unknown.

The confrontation takes place over the large vertically scrolling installations and battle cruisers of the Hadian fleet, with your craft under constant attack from their small star-fighters.



This has got to be one of the most annoying games I've ever played: it's difficult to the point of being unplayable. The backdrops are very pretty and the ships look smart, but the only way I got to see anything past the second level was by using an unlimited lives poke. Right from the start you come under the most vicious of attacks, with up to about ten alien ships appearing at one time, all needing to be avoided and all lobbing bombs at you. Gaining extra armament or speed is easy enough, but actually keeping it for more than a few seconds isn't. The final insult was that after battling through for 20 minutes and completing the whole game, it finally says 'Game Over'. No congratulatory message or anything – great! Once again the lack of playability makes me wonder if playtesting went on at all . . .

As you progress through the Hadian hordes, your ship's armament is increased by blasting specific sections of the background which contain vital equipment. When released, the sections of equipment drift down the screen and attach themselves to your craft on contact, increasing its speed, fire power or defences.



The mission increases in danger as our under-equipped hero runs the gauntlet of the Hadian forces



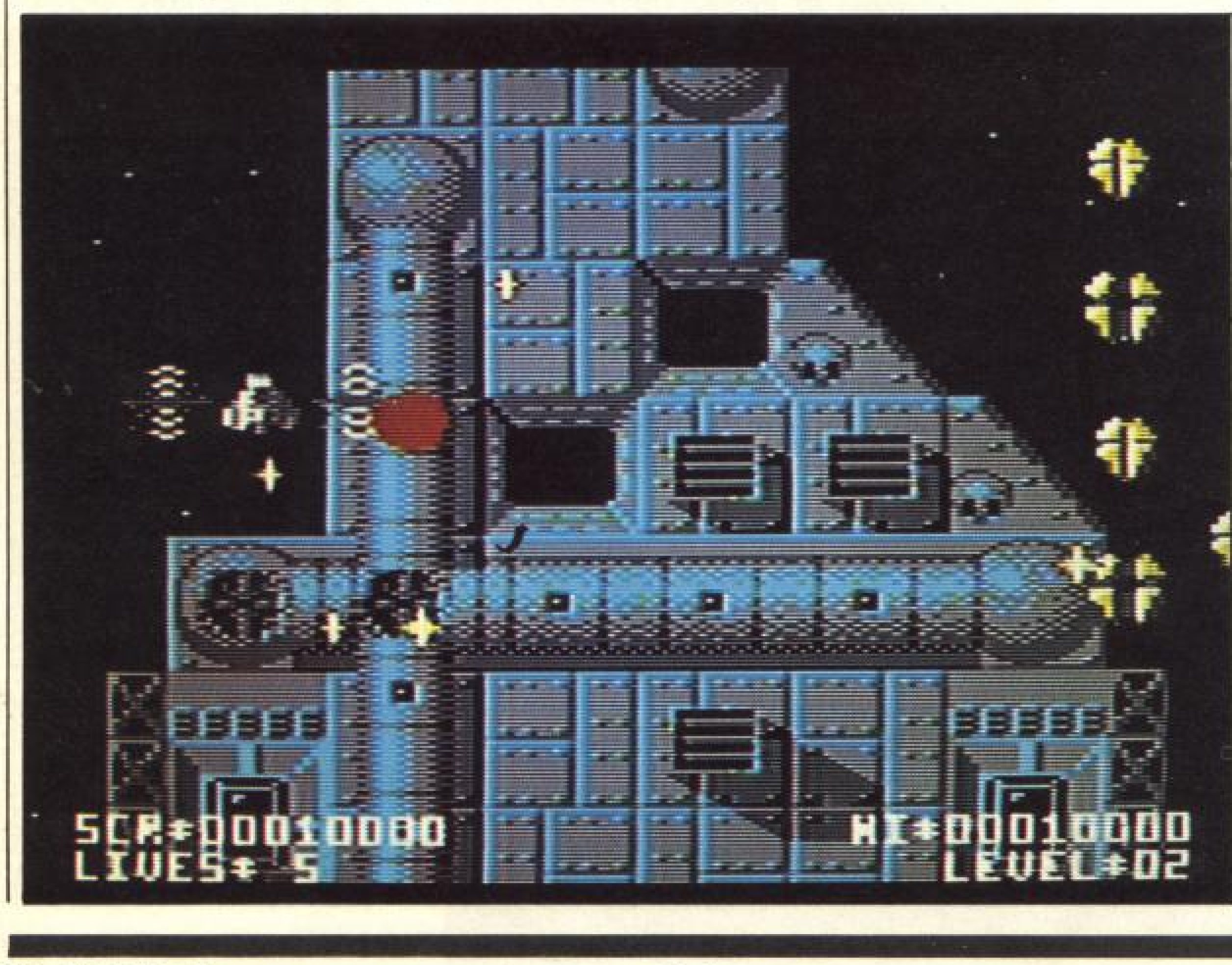
There isn't much to say about this lack-lustre horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up. Dodging, blasting, picking up extra weapons . . . it's all very predictable and boring. In some games this action works well, but here the space craft's armament is useless and it moves around at a snail's pace – even with the extra speed add-on. The action hasn't been particularly well thought out, and doesn't look good when compared with other similarly priced shoot 'em ups. I could not and will not recommend it.



This is the first game I've played where the extra weapons are virtually useless. The extra speed is fine, but everything else is so clumsy and unwieldy that it gets blown off within seconds. Another very annoying point is the speed of firing – it's far, far too slow. The alien ships attack by the dozen, and the feeble firing rate just isn't enough to defend the ship properly. It's just about possible to battle through the levels if you're prepared to stick at it, but I found the ship's limitations made the game too frustrating to be worth persevering with. The graphics and sound are pretty good, but in the end it's the gameplay that matters – and this hasn't much.

The eventual aim of your mission is to penetrate all 15 levels of the Hadian territory and ultimately confront and destroy the main command vessel containing The Emperor himself.

Clad in fetching side-spinners, the fighter attracts the attention of yet more aliens



PRESENTATION 76%
Neatly laid out, but suffering from a severe lack of options.

GRAPHICS 79%
Nicely drawn backdrops complemented by an impressive array of alien vessels.

SOUND 51%
Fairly standard WE Music soundtrack, and the effects are somewhat ill-suited.

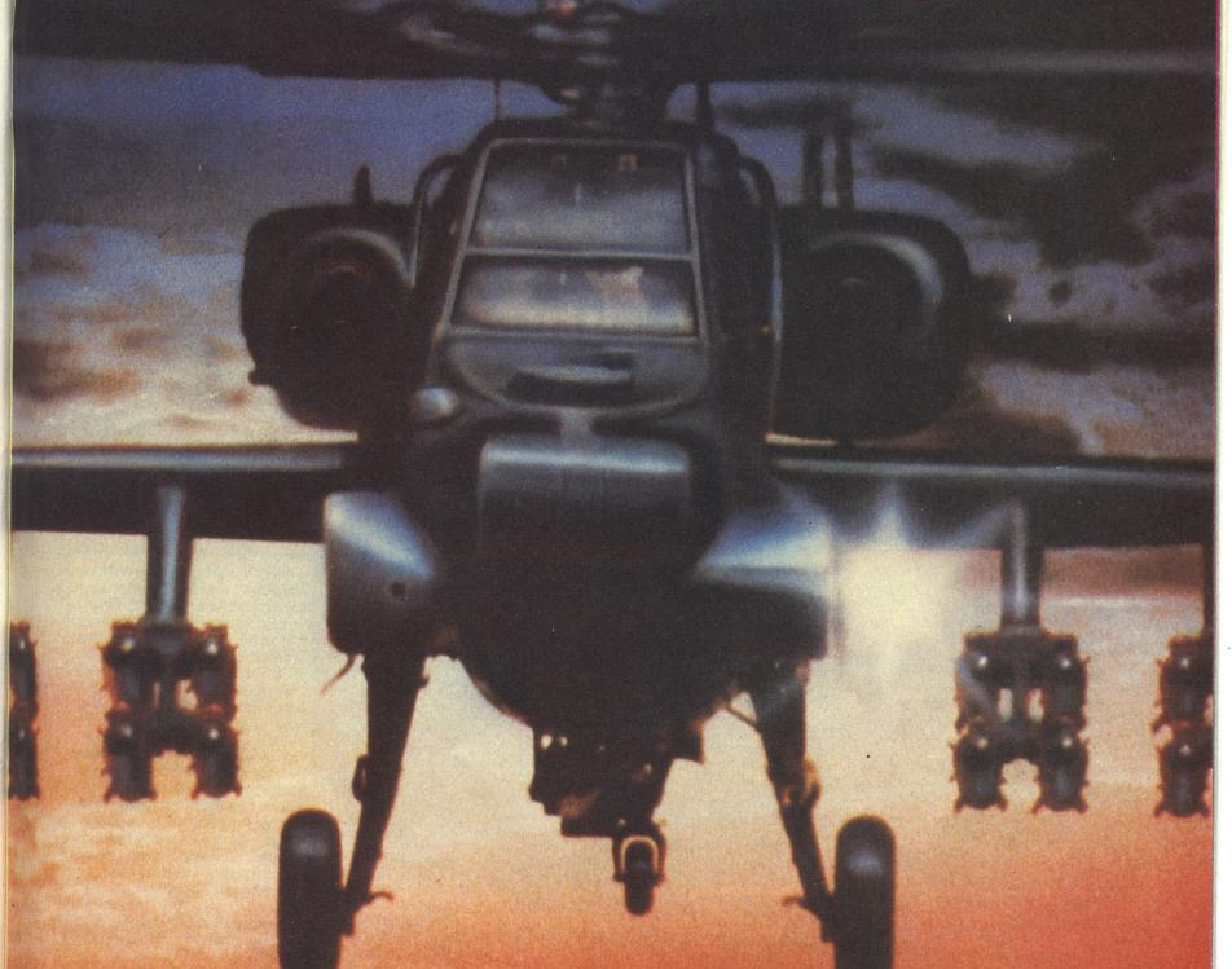
HOOKABILITY 35%
Though straightforward, the going is frustratingly hard from the start.

LASTABILITY 48%
Fifteen increasingly difficult levels to conquer, but an awful lot of patience is needed to do so.

OVERALL 55%
All the ingredients are here for a first-class game, but *Hades Nebula* is sadly half-baked.

''I wonder if they know what Nebula means..'

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SIZZLER

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DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

Mirrorsoft, £14.95 disk, joystick only

● **Re-capture the long-lost days of chivalry in this stunning release from Cinemaware.**

The King is dead; long live the King – whoever that may be. Britain lies in disarray, following the Monarch's premature demise at the hands of Normans. The crown has been stolen and the future of Britain lies in your hands. Only those of strong heart and noble spirit may attempt to deliver the country from the hands of the Norman oppressors and retake the throne in the name of the Saxons.

Defender of the Crown gives you the chance to re-live the age of chivalry, taking charge of knights and castles in an attempt to conquer the Normans, liberate Britain and thus become its ruler.

After film-style opening credits, you make a choice between four Lords, each having differing strengths in the disciplines of Swordplay, Leadership, and Jousting. Having made this choice, the game proper loads and a screen appears with a portrait of your character and information about his current Income, Wealth, Strength of Army, and Individual Characteristics. This screen reappears after each 'turn', (representing a month in game time), and the portrait alters according to the character's mood, which in turn depends on the current state of play.

The action takes place across a map of Medieaval Britain which is divided into 19 areas, including Sherwood forest. Six of these areas are occupied by castles,

Re-live the days of chivalrous knights, evil barons and beautiful maidens with this innovative piece of software! The gameplay is simple, but for some strange reason it's incredibly addictive. Once I started playing I just couldn't stop – as soon as my character bit the dust I was flipping the disk for another go. Even after I'd finished, I was still thinking about how to defeat the other Lords! As well as the simple strategy of working out which area to conquer and what strengths the army should be, there are also the wonderful arcade sequences. The amazing 3D-style joust is my personal favourite, with the incredibly impressive siege sequence coming a close second. There's plenty of lasting appeal too, with four characters to choose from and three different starting points of your conquest of England. If you have a disk drive, Defender of the Crown **is what it's been waiting for all its life.**



with three held by Normans to the South, and three by Saxons in the North.

Each area has a set income, dependent on the taxes brought in from the working peasants. Land is gained by either annexing unoccupied territory or actually defeating an enemy Lord in combat, therefore driving him from the disputed area.

The main menu appears at the top left of the map, featuring six options: Conquest, Tournament, Go Raiding, Buy Army, Read Map and Pass.

Selecting the Conquest option brings up another menu with the options to Read Map, Transfer and Move Army. This allows you to determine the strengths of your enemies, transfer men and equipment from your garrison to your army, and physically move your army to any land adjacent to that which is under your influence.

Combat takes place on moving into territory occupied by an enemy army. You have several options during the battle, including Ferocious Attack, Bombard or



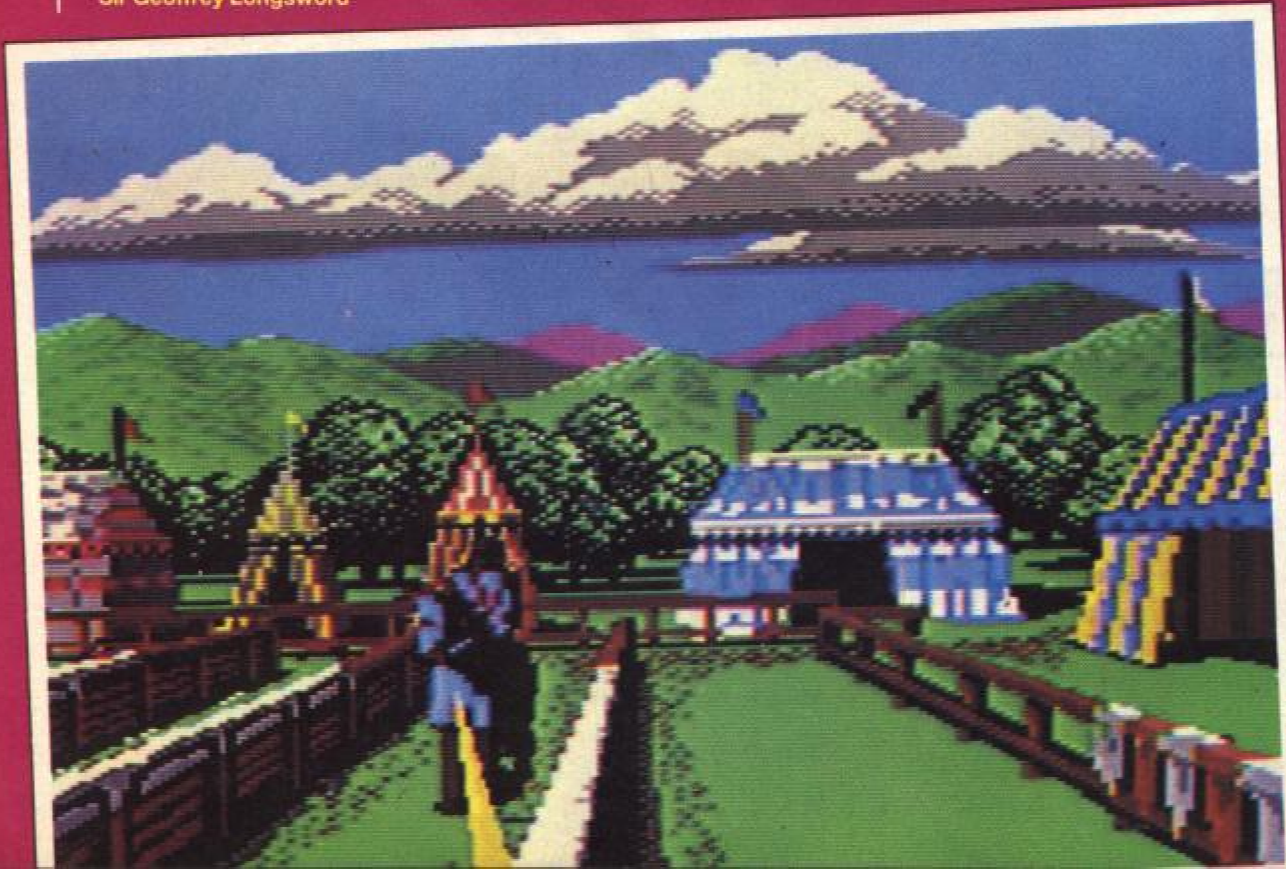
Retreat, but the ultimate outcome is determined by the computer, and is mainly dependent on the strengths of the opposing armies. The battle is displayed symbolically, with the armies represented by single men or mounted knights – corresponding to 25 and 10 units respectively.

When the result of the month's conflicts has been decided, the map displays the newly-acquired territories, positioning the corresponding battle colours in each one. A new month then begins and

Interactive can be a very misleading word. Sometimes it can mean simply pressing a button to change a page every five minutes, while at other times it can mean the opening of a new world inside your computer – fortunately this is one of the latter. Both the static and animated graphics are outstanding throughout, giving the producer's claim that this is an 'interactive movie' some real plausibility. The music is brilliant too, with some excellent medieval tunes, and wonderful sound effects adding even more atmosphere. The fact that you can switch between a wide range of interesting and varied activities saves this game from ever becoming boring – even though it can be played for hours on end. Watch out for the 'love scene' which occurs when you rescue the fair maid . . . but wait until your parents have gone out for the evening.



► As storm clouds gather across the jousting arena you have troubles of your own in the shape of the infamous Sir Geoffrey Longsword





► A trumpet fanfare signals the beginning of the tournament



► Mediaeval Britain is the setting for a power struggle of titanic proportions

the income from your lands is added to your account. When enough gold has been saved, you may access the Buy Army feature and purchase Footmen, Knights, Siege Machines or even a Castle.

Tournaments are called as the months roll by (either by yourself or by other Lords), and honour decrees that you must attend. Before the joust itself, you have the choice to fight for land or fame. Selecting land enables you to fight for Territory (which can be won or lost), or Fame which increases your leadership traits.

Following a fanfare of trumpets, an overhead view of the tournament quickly switches to a side view showing the two combatants as they charge towards each other on their mighty steeds. Before they meet, the viewpoint changes again to that of your character, where the final control of the lance falls into your hands.

Correctly positioning the end of the lance on your opponent's shield and pressing the fire button at the last moment sends him sprawling to the ground. A moment too early or too late, however, and you take a similarly ingracious dive, and your day at the tournament has ended. If you are skillful enough to win three jousts in succession, you are named as the champion for the day, and receive a prize of gold.

The option to 'go raiding' allows you to indulge in some clandestine night-time manoeuvres. Having chosen an opponent's castle, you take a group of your best men and fight your way to an inner sanctum where gold booty is your reward. Failing to despatch the guard-at-arms results in your capture, where a hefty bribe is needed to secure your freedom. You then return to your castle, poorer, but wiser.

During your quest for the throne, your destiny lies in the hands of fate, which takes the shape of a 'meanwhile . . . ', whereupon some external factor influences your destiny. This may bode ill, such as a Viking attack upon your castle with the loss of some of your men, or an ambush is made and your finest catapult sabotaged. If good fortune comes your way, Robin of Locksley may bring a gift of gold to swell your coffers, or you may even have the chance to rescue a princess, and who knows what this may bring . . .

To stand any chance in your bid for the crown, you need to besiege enemy castle in order to remove the opposing Lord from the power struggle, and also take over his lands. To do this, a catapult is needed to demolish the walls of the fortress and allow your army to enter.

On three occasions during the game you are allowed to pay a visit to Sherwood Forest, and your Saxon ally, Robin of Locksley (otherwise known as Robin Hood). He offers his help in raiding and sieges and plays an important in tipping the balance of power in your favour.

Your ultimate aim is to defeat the three Norman Lords and capture their castles. Successfully achieving this results in your character taking the Throne and living happily ever after.

No doubt many of you will have seen screen pictures of this game on a certain 16-bit machine, and thought, 'what on earth would a 64 version turn out like?' The surprising answer to this is – extremely good indeed. Defender of the Crown **plays very much like many of the classic strategy board games such as 'Risk' or 'Diplomacy': it's awful when you're losing, but absolutely brilliant when you're winning. Seeing your small empire grow around you definitely appeals to the more basic instinct of greed for power and wealth. Although fairly simple, the gameplay is still good enough alone to warrant its purchase, but add to this** the **finest static graphics to grace a 64 game, (and some pretty nifty animated sequences too) and you have one essential purchase. The game is simply in a class of its own. I really can't wait for the next Cinemaware release.**



PRESENTATION 95%
Superb documentation and beautiful on-screen appearance. The multi-load is adequately handled, and only marred slightly by the title credit sequence.

GRAPHICS 98%
Probably the best static graphics to be featured in a '64 game to date – the animation's not bad either!

SOUND 95%
A multitude of suitably Medieaval tunes, and excellent spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 96%
The cursor/menu system is easy to use and the game structure is user-friendly and simple.

LASTABILITY 92%
Retains heaps of playability – even after the Kingdom has been conquered for the first time.

OVERALL 94%
An experience which should not be missed by any disk drive owner.

► Shadowy figures lock in mortal combat



TWIN TORNADO

Doctor Soft Simulations, £9.95 cass, £11.95 disk, joystick and keys, (optional link cable £9.95)

Viewers of 'Micro Live' may remember an innovative flight simulator for the BBC, which linked two machines together, allowing dogfights to be fought with each person having a first-person view of the aerial battle.

That program was called *Twin Tornado*, and it is now available on the 64, retaining both the one and two-player options of the original.

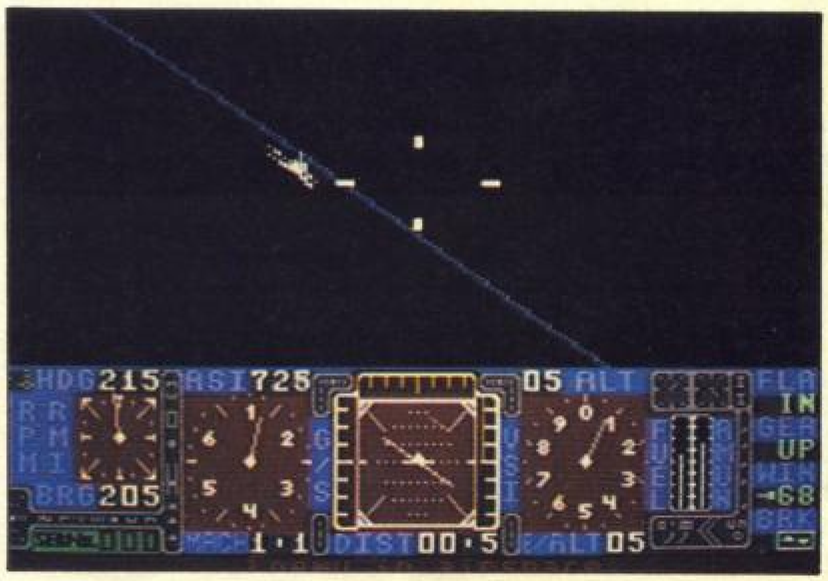
There are three simulation modes incorporated within the program: single player practice, single and twin player air-to-air combat. In each case the skill level is assigned from a choice of 16 – increasing the wind speed and making the computer pilot more difficult to defeat in the single player mode.



Whether or not this is a real 'simulator' is arguable, but as a flight and fight game, it's great. The speed of the vectors is commendably fast, and consequently the action runs at a rapid rate. Flying around shooting down the enemy is enjoyable fun, and the extra complexity of having to keep an eye on fuel and ammunition levels (and having to land every so often to top them up) adds variety to the action. The action really comes into its own when two Commodores are connected – some brilliant and competitive dogfights can be enjoyed. If you're a flight sim fan, try this out – especially if you've a Commodore owning friend who can go halves on the lead.



Flight simulations are not exactly the most successful of projects to attempt on home micros, but Twin Tornado **is by far the most playable air-to-air combat game I have ever encountered. Even the single player mode offers a decent challenge – the computer controlled plane being a worthy opponent on the higher levels. One thing that I have not seen before is the ability of the program to deal with the differences in height between combatants; you are able to attack another craft from above or below, while usually you are placed at corresponding heights by the computer (like** F-15 Strike Eagle**). In two-player mode, this gives a tremendous feeling of actual flight. After one rather hard fought battle with Biggles Rignall, I left the machine feeling quite airsick. If you are expecting lots of clever vector graphics or a true flight simulation, then don't bother. But if you fancy some real exhilaration, and, more importantly, if you have access to two 64's – then** Twin Tornado **will provide loads of furious adrenalin-pumping action.**



► Despite the darkness of the night, the enemy is almost in your sights

A normal cockpit display is given with indicators lying at the bottom of the screen giving all the information needed to fly a Tornado. Control is via a joystick which covering the main controls for flight, with an option for a second to control the throttle. There are 30 secondary functions accessed from keyboard, covering the general running of the plane, and also allowing certain facets of the gameplay to be changed, such as day or night flight, and the ability to disable ground data for the vector graphics and effectively speed up the frame rate.

The ability to fly without crashing in practice mode allows familiarisation with the controls of the plane. The border flashes red to signify that any similar manoeuvre would normally result in the destruction of your jet, but the plane keeps flying. You also have the option of starting a runway approach, in this mode, allowing landing to be practised.

The two-player option is accessed when two machines have been linked using the optional connecting lead via their serial ports. Selecting the correct mode causes a signal to be sent between them, synchronising the machines and allowing battle to commence.

Both pilots begin at separate airstrips, and must reach a height of 6000 feet or higher before they fall within each other's detection range. An 'Enemy in Airspace' warning then appears and the Radar/Magnetic bearing Indicator (RMI), which lies at the left of the control panel, shows the direction in which the aircraft lies allowing you to home in for the kill.

When the enemy falls within visual range, both planes appear on opposing screens, and the outcome of the dogfight then lies entirely in the hands of the pilots!

The package includes a voucher for three pounds off the price of the connecting lead.

PRESENTATION 93%
A superb array of options, including two-machine link up and use of second joystick.

GRAPHICS 71%
Little more than ground, sky, runway and opponent, but vectors are very fast and more than adequate for what the program attempts to achieve.

SOUND 52%
Realistic engine sounds, but not much else.

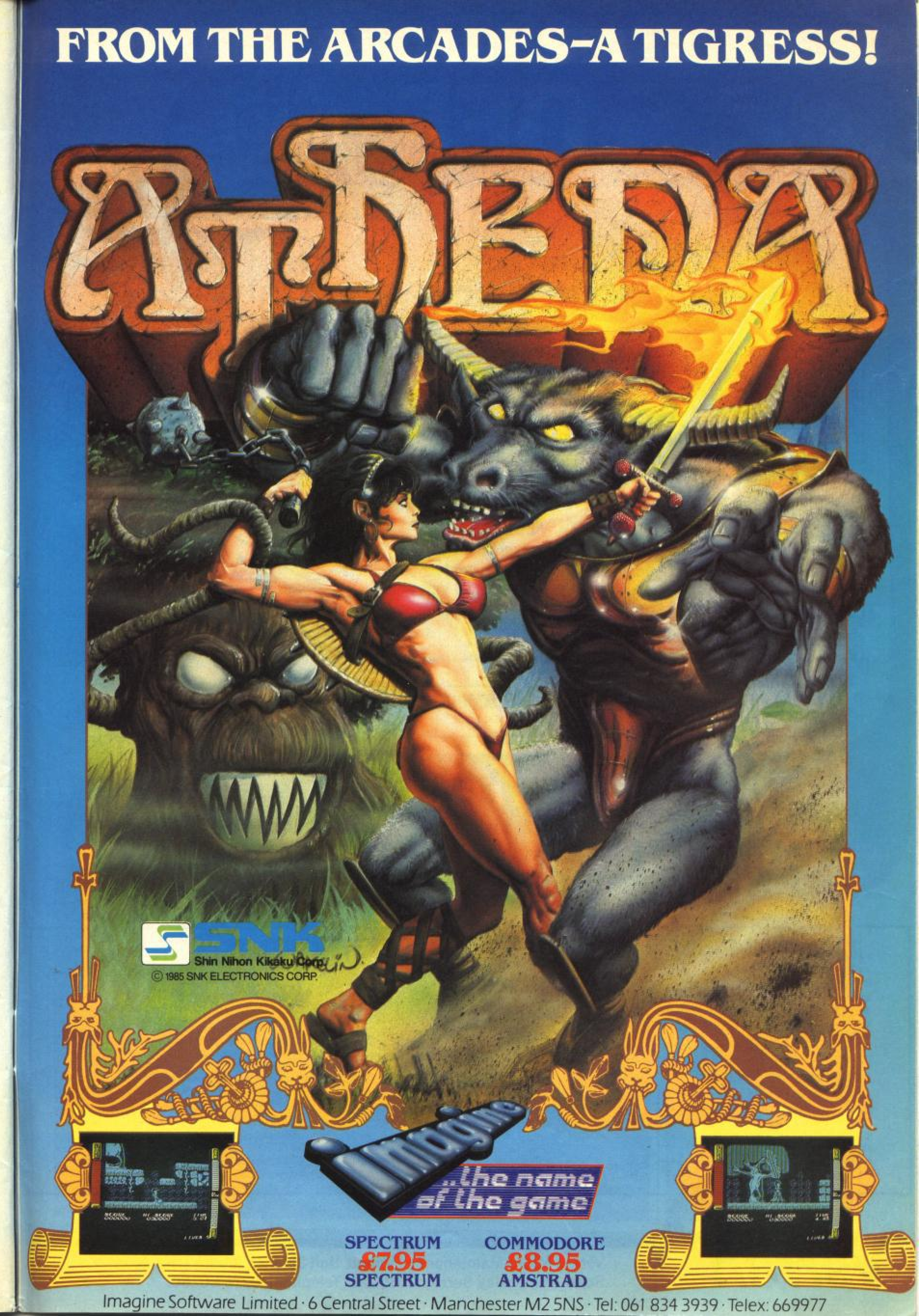
HOOKABILITY 84%
A long list of controls to be mastered for precision flying, but you should be airborne quickly enough.

LASTABILITY 76%
Ultimately repetitive for the single player, but linked machines offer a lot of long-term blasting.

OVERALL 85%
An innovative piece of software which is the only true one-on-one combat game presently available for the 64.

► Your powerful Tornado jet-plane sits silently on the runway ready for action at any moment




FROM THE ARCADES–A TIGRESS!
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QUARTET

Activision, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick or keys

Deep in outer space, terrorists have overrun a space colony. The only hope for the isolated inhabitants are – The Quartet. This deadly foursome of Edgar, Lee, Mary and Joe each has their own special abilities, but only two characters can be controlled on the mission.

The action takes place over the space colony's 22 horizontally scrolling levels. To progress through a level, the player seeks out the mechanical monster who holds the key to the next level, destroys it and grabs the key to the exit.

Throughout each level, terrorists leap out of portals and attack the dynamic duo. If they aren't blasted and manage to touch a character, his or her power, represented numerically at the top of the screen, is reduced and the character disabled for a few seconds.

Littered throughout the space colony are springs, shields, jet packs, score multipliers, smart bombs and anti-alien timers which are automatically picked up when touched and added to the character's armoury for the duration of the level.

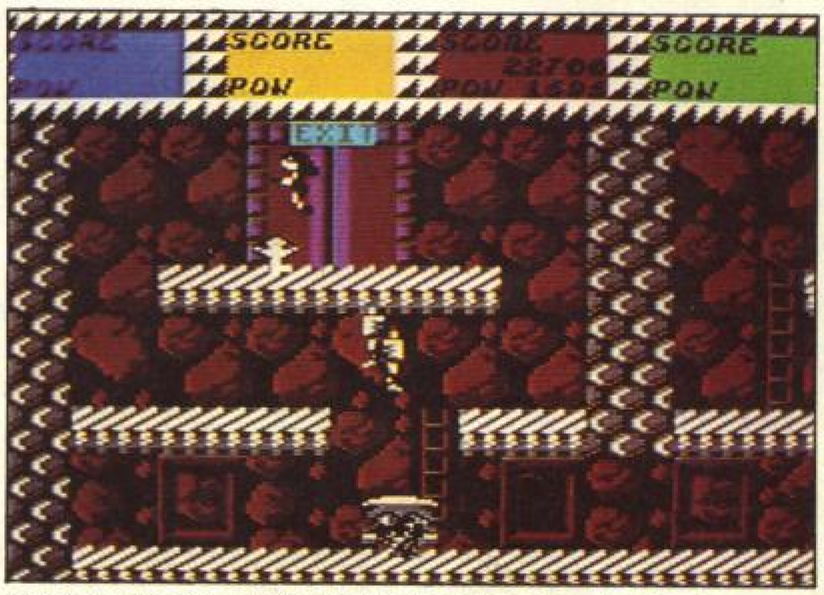
When all 22 levels have been conquered you find that the terrorists have just reclaimed the space colony, and consequently the battle begins again.



A simultaneous multi-player platform game has a lot of potential for success, but one of this quality certainly doesn't deserve any. I played it for a while on my own, and found it a great disappointment – and even when I played it with someone else I found that to be only a minor improvement. The game itself isn't enjoyable, the graphics are pretty ugly, and there is a severe doubt about the lastability. There is surely no more than a few hours interest contained in this package – and for a full price game, I consider that pretty appalling.



I've played Quartet **in the arcades quite a few times, and can quite honestly say that this 'officially licensed conversion' is nothing like it.** Duet **(well that's what it should be called as only two characters can be controlled at once) is a shoddy and unprofessional waste of money. I can't understand what Activision are doing releasing it in its current state. The game slows down when there are more than a couple of sprites on screen, the scrolling constantly speeds up and slows down and the firepower doesn't vary from character to character. The graphics are absolutely awful, with indistinct sprites (especially the monsters) and backdrops so bad that they look as though they've corrupted. The original's playability has also disappeared. My first go went on for hours, and after a couple of games I'd gone round the levels a couple of times and become totally bored. Go to the arcades if you want to play** Quartet, **and buy something else if you want to play a good Commodore game.**

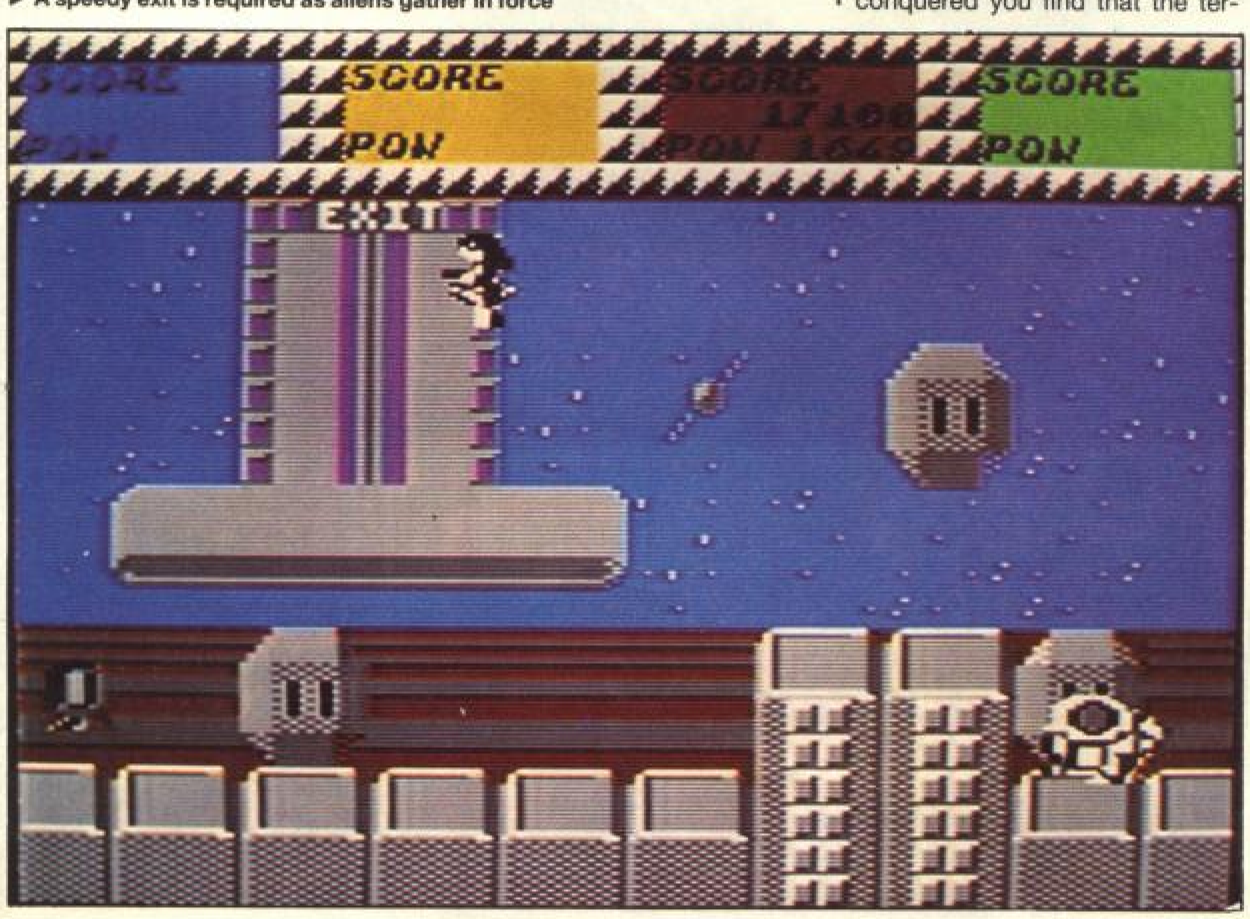


► With the monster defeated and the key collected, our hero heads for the Exit Portal



I suppose Quartet **can be likened to** Gauntlet **in that it features 'Two Player On Screen At One Time-O-Vision', and also because it involves the negotiation of maze-type screens, collection of keys and the destruction of creatures. Mind you that's where the resemblance ends,** Gauntlet **was pretty good and** Quartet **is really awful. The characters and aliens have been reduced to meaningless sprites, and their movement around the screen is awful. The single redeeming feature of this rubbish is the music – and that isn't that brilliant either.**

► A speedy exit is required as aliens gather in force



PRESENTATION 67%
Reasonable on-screen presentation, but long and annoying delays throughout.

GRAPHICS 29%
Awful sprites and backdrops which do no justice to the arcade original.

SOUND 74%
A few decent tunes and jingles.

HOOKABILITY 32%
Too easy to play, with the first game going on for ages.

LASTABILITY 15%
The poor playability and boring gameplay generate no desire to return.

OVERALL 15%
A badly-programmed arcade conversion which has lost all of the original's fun and compulsion.

ZZAP! TEST

THE LAST NINJA

System 3, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick with keys

● **System 3's 300K blockbuster explodes into life**

Long ago, at the birth of one of the world's earliest civilisations, a mysterious clan formed and became known as the Ninja brotherhood. Feared even by the powerful Samurai, their potent combination of martial arts and mind control ensured their place at the top of the oriental hierarchy.

Every ten years, the Ninja army travelled to the Island of Lin Fen to pay homage to the shrine of the White Ninja. Realising that this was the only time in which he would see the entire band of Ninja's *en masse*, their arch enemy, Kunitoki, seized the opportunity to attempt their total destruction. The evil Shogun summoned forth all the spirits he could muster from the dark side of magic and used them to wipe out all life on the island.



▲ **Lettuce spray . . . but Armakuni must stow his weapon before he can kneel at the Fountain Of Knowledge and share its secrets**

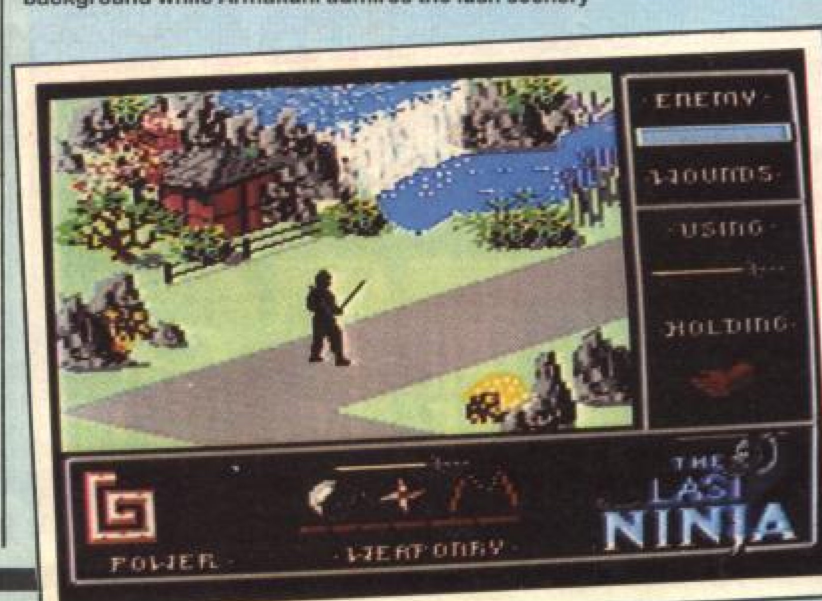


▼ **Having traversed the Lin Fen Wasteland mountain range, a little magic is needed to pass the fire-breathing statue**



The ZZAP! team got its first glimpse of The Last Ninja **in the weeks leading up to the production of our Sampler cassette, and what most impressed me then was the main character's movement – being some of the most realistic I've ever seen. The completed product has lived up to the expectations generated by this early glimpse, and thankfully has arrived with gameplay to match its stunning graphics. The control method is quite tricky to begin with, but actually adds to the enjoyment when mastered. The music too is more than cosmetic, adding impetus to the player's action as it intermittently speeds up and slows down.** The Last Ninja **is one of those rare games which offers hours of consistently puzzling and enjoyable gameplay.**

▼ **Inside the Palace Gardens, a waterfall cascades in the background while Armakuni admires the lush scenery**



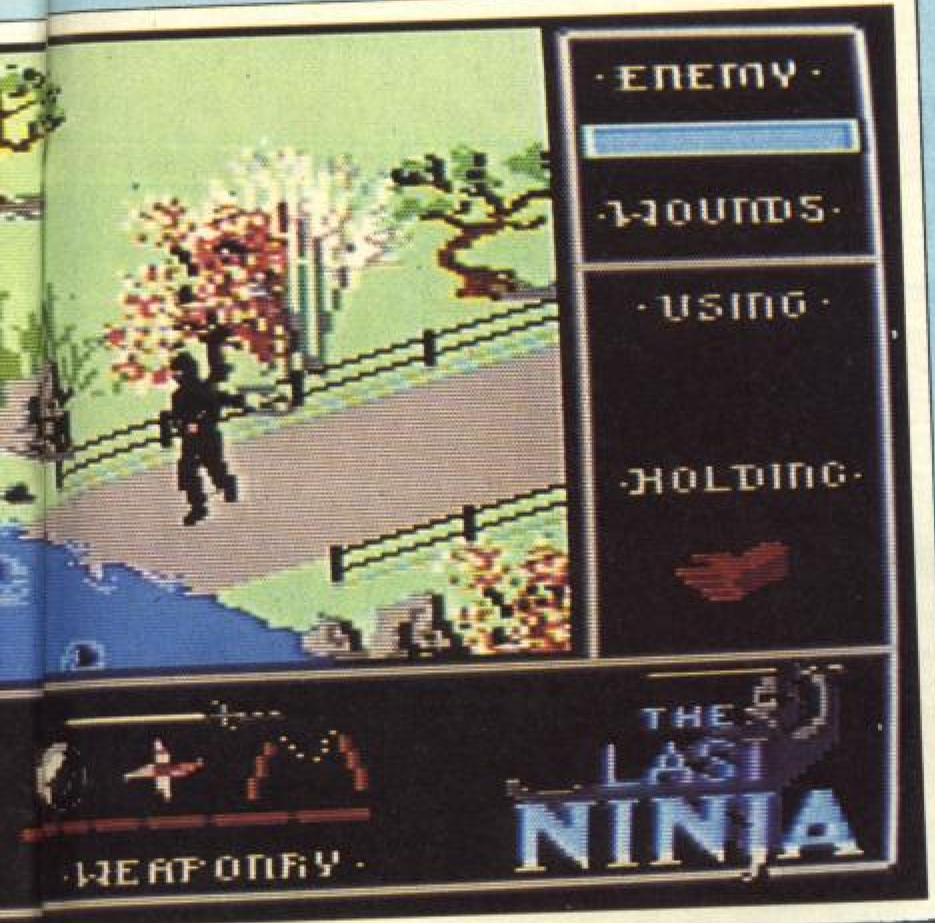


▲ **A black and blue sea creature rears its ugly head from a stepping stone-strewn stream in the palace gardens**

Believing his terrible task to be complete, Kunitoki set sail for the deserted island with his army of guards and Samurai officers. Should these dark forces find the legendary Koga Scrolls, they could become a new Ninja Force – but this time under the evil Emperor's control.

However, one Ninja did live through the holocaust. Armakuni had been left behind to guard the Bunkinkan Shrine, and consequently survived the terrible massacre. Hearing the news of his comrades' betrayal, he too sets out for the remote island – his one purpose in life being the recovery the ancient secrets from the clutches of the Samurai, and revenge for his murdered brothers . . .

The island of Lin Fen is split into six distinct sections which must be negotiated in order – the Wilderness, Wastelands, Palace Gardens and Dungeons, followed by the lower level of the Palace, and finally the Palace's Inner Sanctum. Each section is loaded separately, and consists of a small maze of pathways crossed by rivers and marshes. A puzzle has to be solved before Armakuni can progress between sections – for instance, having defeated many of the Samurai's guards and traversed a marsh by somersaulting from log to log, he must then pass a fire-breathing dragon – but how?

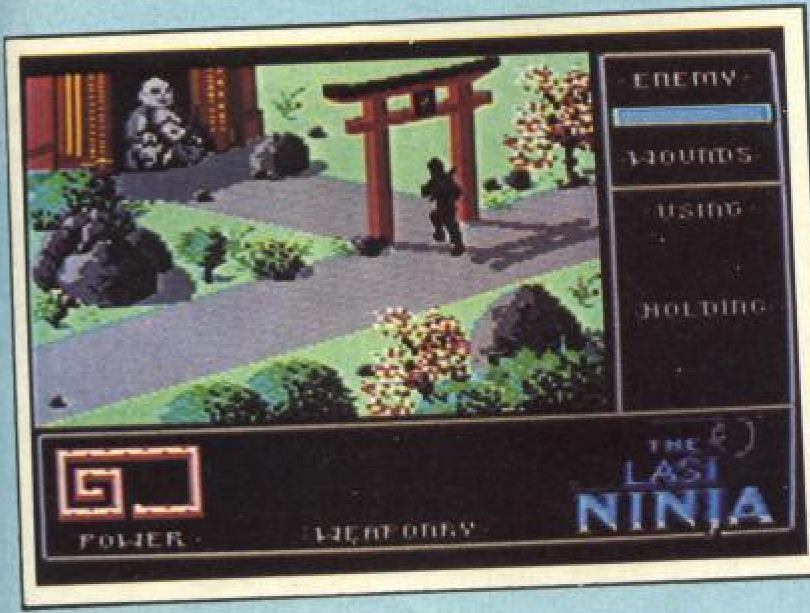




▲ No rest for the wicked – the Last Ninja gets to grips with one of the Samurai's many marauding minions

I'm always a sucker for smart graphics, and The Last Ninja **has some real crackers – screens and screens of them in fact. The animation on Ninja and his pals is simply gorgeous and I love the way that the character is so flexible: he can execute all manner of movements, depending on his weapon or the item which he's using. The precision needed to co-ordinate all of this movement proves challenging rather than frustrating, and it really feels as if you are controlling a living being, not merely a bunch of sprites. The lack of a save game feature may prove irritating at a later stage, but this is the only fault I could find with what is otherwise an exceptional piece of software – not to be missed.**





▲ Devoid of weaponry and low on energy, Armakuni considers the merits of listening to the voice of Bhudda (he'll say carry on your slaughter . . .)

Guards patrol the island, and are either defeated in combat or deftly avoided. Armakuni uses his fists and feet to despatch his opponents, or alternatively uses one of the five weapons found along the way – a sword, numchukas, three smoke bombs, six shuriken stars and a bamboo staff. Other useful objects include a pouch which enables him to carry other objects, a key, apples (which provide extra lives), a claw, a glove (best worn before picking up a certain object which is otherwise deadly to the touch), an amulet and more.

Ninja Magic is found in certain locations, endowing the hero with temporary invulnerability when collected, and consequently allowing him to overcome otherwise impassable obstacles.



The Last Ninja's gameplay isn't anything special, but the concept has been executed extremely well. It isn't as interactive as I would have liked, and when it boils down to it there isn't really much to it – but at least when you solve a problem you feel as though you've achieved something. The first two loads didn't prove too difficult to complete – they were occasionally frustrating, but not overly taxing. The graphics however are nothing short of brilliant, with solid and realistic backdrops and beautifully animated sprites. I particularly like the way that the Ninja and his enemies produce their weapons prior to a fight – very effective. There's something about The Last Ninja **which reminds me of an Ultimate adventure, although that said, this is far more enjoyable to play . . . even with the multi-load.**

Bordering the playing area is an information display, showing the Ninja's energy, weapons carried, weapon in use, object held, and the opponent's energy.

PRESENTATION 90%
Excellent, apart from the inflexible multi-load.

GRAPHICS 98%
Stunning animation across superb and varied backgrounds.

SOUND 88%
Twelve pleasant and suitably Oriental tunes, adding greatly to the the tension and atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 93%
Tricky control method, made up for by the relative ease of the initial screens.

LASTABILITY 91%
Each of the 150 screens provides a real challenge.

OVERALL 94%
Enough depth and action to satisfy both adventurers and martial artists.

SEVEN NEW MIND BLOWING SIMULATIONS FROM SSI

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS INC

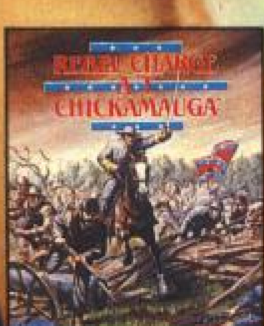
From the world's greatest creator of simulation software comes a further collection of outstanding challenges. Relive some of the momentous struggles that have changed the course of man's history; escape to worlds of fantasy and mystery where lies the unknown or create your own encounters played out in time and place of your own choosing. These are the challenges in which you take complete control.



B – 24

From the war torn skies of World War II emerged one legendary offensive weapon – the B – 24 bomber. This superb simulation allows you to recreate the exploits of this great aeroplane on single mission runs or a 19 mission campaign to destroy oil refineries in Ploetsi, Rumania.

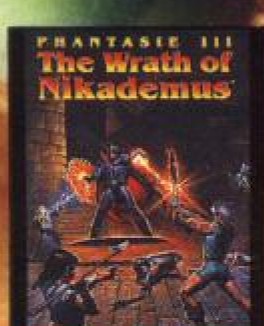
As pilot you control the mission flight on a bombing raid from your home base in Italy; as group leader you command 40 B – 24's on bomb runs to 14 targets deciding on when and where to bomb depending upon weather, plan availability, group efficiency and target oil production levels. A flight and combat simulation of unparalleled quality.



REBEL CHARGE AT CHICKAMANGA

Is the definitive simulation of the South's last major offensive thr... – the Battle of Chickamanga. This game faithfully recreates the two-day battle to give you the opportunity to try and repeat or reverse history.

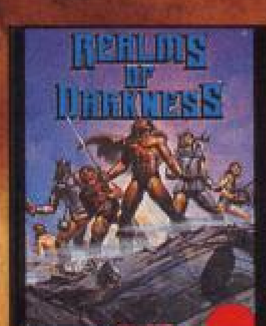
APPLE, ATARI, CBM 64 £24.9... Disk £29.99 IBM



PHANTASIE III – THE WRATH OF NIKADEMUS

Promises a spell-binding story-line with enough twists and turns to satisfy your wildest fantasies. This time the Dark Lord Nikademus has set his evil sights on conquering not only an island, but the entire world.

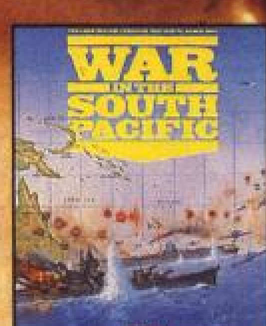
ATARI, AMIGA £24.99



REALMS OF DARKNESS

Fame, fortune and power. These are the spoils of victory for those who survive this incredibly challenging and multi-faceted fantasy adventure game.

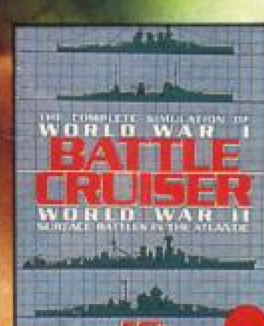
CBM 64/128 £19.99



WAR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Three exciting scenarios from the history making land, sea and air campaigns of May 1942 to March 1943.

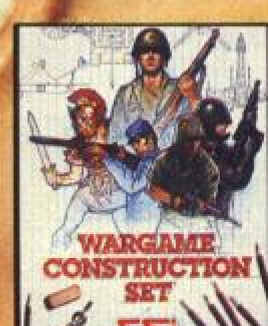
CBM 64/128, APPLE, ATARI £19.99



BATTLE CRUISER

Two exhilarating sea-faring opportunities to relive the classic naval engagements of World War I between Great Britain and Germany and reenact World War II surface battles between Britain/France and Germany/Italy.

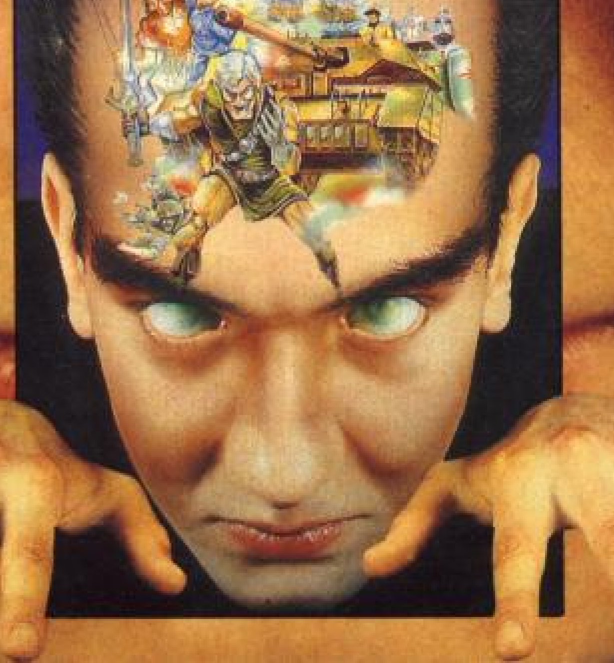
CBM 64/128, APPLE, ATARI £19.99



WAR GAME CONSTRUCTION SET

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WHAT'S New



ACTIVISION SIGN SCHWARZNEGGER

Activision have signed an agreement giving them the computer rights over Arnold Schwarznegger's latest film, *Predator*.

The muscle-bound strongman's latest blockbuster opened in America last month to a record taking of just over $12 million in its first three days. It now look all set to smash several box-office records.

According to Activision's resident Wonder Boy, Andrew Wright, the film 'is a cross between *Alien* and *Rambo* and is set in South America.' Sounds interesting – more about the film and computer game as and when we hear it.



Karen Gordon

INTRODUCING MISS AUGUST

Recognise the face from the cover? Yes, it's gorgeous, pouting ZZAP! megastar KAREN GORDON from Worcester, winner of the ZZAP! 'My face for the Cover' competition.

The lucky young lady was whisked to Ludlow on an all-expenses paid trip, had a modelling session with our Cameraman, lunch with the lads and went home tired and happy clutching a bag full of goodies. Coo!

AND PIGS MIGHT RUN A MAGAZINE

It's a pigs life for readers of ZZAP!'s sister magazine, CRASH. This month, the Spectrum dedicated mag is running a unique 16-page pull-out OINK special. The IPC magazine first appeared last year, and swiftly gained a large readership with the aid of it's extremely humorous satirical cartoon strips.

If you're an Oink fan, or are just interested, check it out – it's rolling about in the mud at a newsagents near you.

BACK SEAT FOR THE COMMODORE 64

Last month saw the June Commodore Show take place at the Novotel in London, and what a disappointment it was too. There were plenty of Amigas on display, but the only Commodore 64 machines and software the ZZAP! lads could find were on retailer and dealer stands – either sitting in boxes or in buckets going cheap.

The main Amiga stand was very impressive, with a variety of hardware add-ons showing the machine's capabilities, but impressive software support was lacking.

The show consisted mainly of software dealers, hardware manufacturers and minor magazines, who hoped to boost flagging sales with a little PR. ZZAP! decided against occupying a stand, and instead chose to mingle with the crowds where we could meet the readers direct.

UP, UP AND AWAY IN MY BEAUTIFUL BALLOON

Have you been following the progress of Richard Branson's Atlantic balloon race? You can't really help it can you?

Virgin have just released the computer game of the event, a one or two player event in which you fly either the Virgin balloon or its opponent across the Atlantic.

The action is displayed split screen, with each player controlling a laser spitting eagle for protection. It's all good, clean, zany fun, and there'll be a full review next month.

GRAEME'S MACHINE



Kidd: working with dummy

Late of Crash and LM, our ever-effervescent man of the moment Graeme Kidd, is currently putting together the dummy issue of Newsfield's latest venture, **The Games Machine**.

The new magazine will cover the whole computer games market, including 8-bit and 16-bit machines, consoles, arcade news, techno-toys and, as the saying goes, lots, lots more . . . We'll keep you posted.

FOR YOUR 128s ONLY

Commodore 128 owners are in for a rare treat in a couple of month's time when CRL release their second '128 only' game.

Stratton is to be released on both Commodore formats, but will have a 128 specific version featuring more locations and an animated introduction on an initial separate load.

The action takes place in a completely automated air terminal which has gone haywire, with you roaming about the complex in an attempt to shut down all the computer-controlled units. The game features full screen scrolling and should be released in the not-too-distant future.

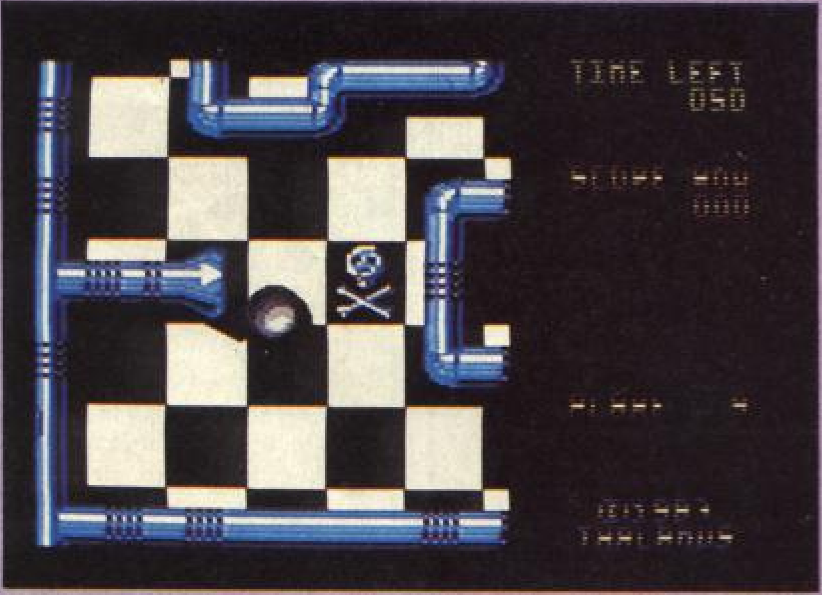
EMBARK ON THE QUEST FOR ULTIMATE DEXTERITY

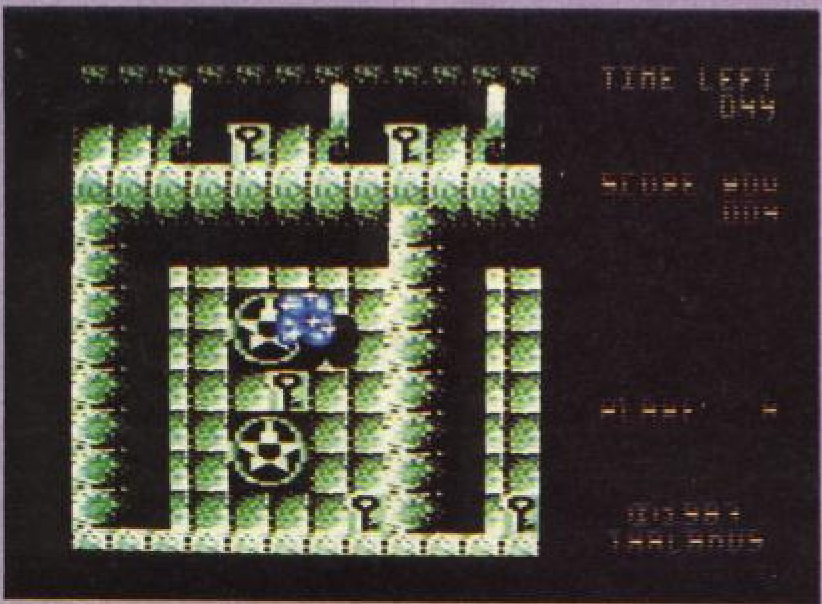
Stavros Fasoulas, author of *Sanxion* and *Delta*, is currently putting the finishing touches to his latest game, *Quedex: The Quest for Ultimate Dexterity*.

Those who are waiting for a third horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up may be disappointed to find that *Quedex* is a departure from Stavros' usual style. This time Finland's foremost programmer has decided to produce a game for all tastes, with the emphasis on manual and mental dexterity rather than the ability to destroy wave after wave of marauding alien (although he says the final version will include a section for spriticidal maniacs).

The action involves directing a ball across ten 'planes', a weird multi-directionally scrolling world viewed from above that is completed by negotiating a host of devious puzzles and obstacles. The planes can be played in any order and are accessed at any time by pressing the relevant number on the keyboard. The objective is to complete all ten planes within the allotted time, a task which involves some very dextrous gameplay.

Quedex is once again released under the auspices of Thalamus and Mr Fasoulas reckons there's a month or so to go before it's finished . . .





A LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY . .

The latest offering from Software Projects, (bringers of *Dragon's Lair* and *Escape from Singe's Castle*), is *Star Paws* – a not entirely serious chase game set in the depths of space.

The action is centred around the Tasty Space Griffin, a rare and extremely delicious beast, highly valued and much sought after. So highly valued in fact, that it is used as an inter-galactic currency and as a commodity on the stock market.

An unscrupulous band of mercenaries have begun breeding the bird in an attempt to flood the market, and so destabilise the entire currency system. With the Universe in disarray, the mercenaries intend to seize power for themselves . . .

Luckily the Inter-Galactic Police have got wind of this dastardly plan, but due to an error in the unreliable astro-telex system, the bungling Rover Pawstrong has been sent to deal with the mercenaries instead of cool and calculating Neil Armstrong. His mission is to capture and destroy every last one of the Tasty Space Griffins, but with his inexperience and total incompetence, it looks like he could make a complete meal of the mission.

As our canine hero traverses the surface of the horizontally scrolling distant moon, he collects a variety of equipment to help him: anti-gravity pads, a rocket to speed him along after his prey and if he can get close enough, the zap death ray gun brings instant death to all in its path.

The animation is of cartoon quality, whether or not the game will match then is another question – tune in next month a find out.



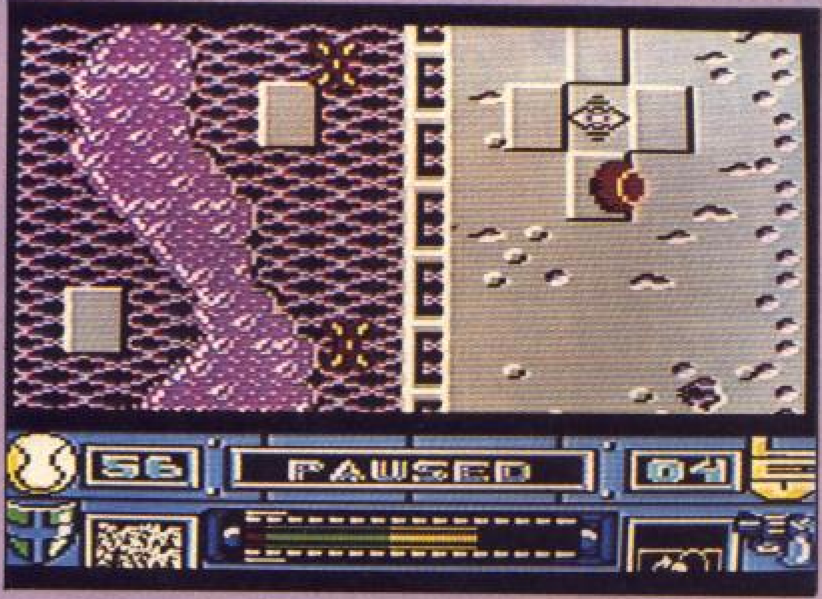


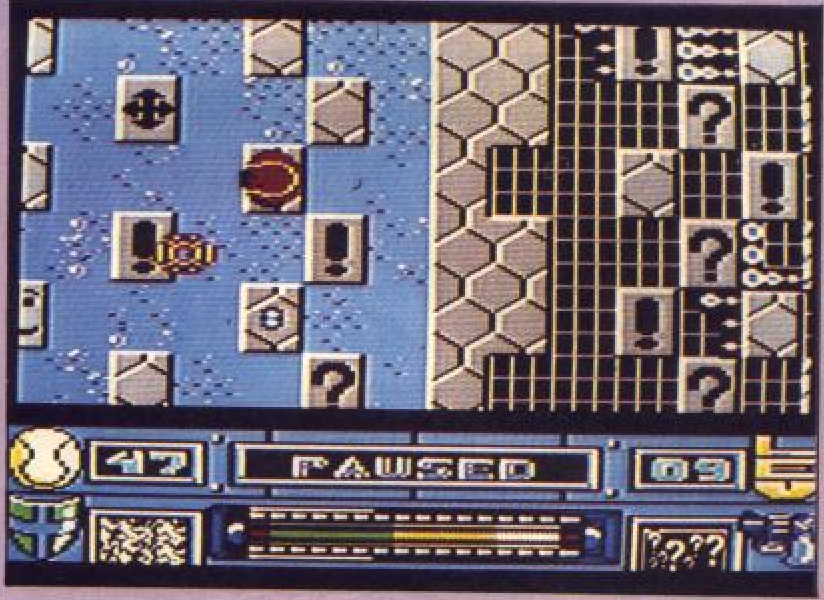
RE-B-B-B-BOUNDER

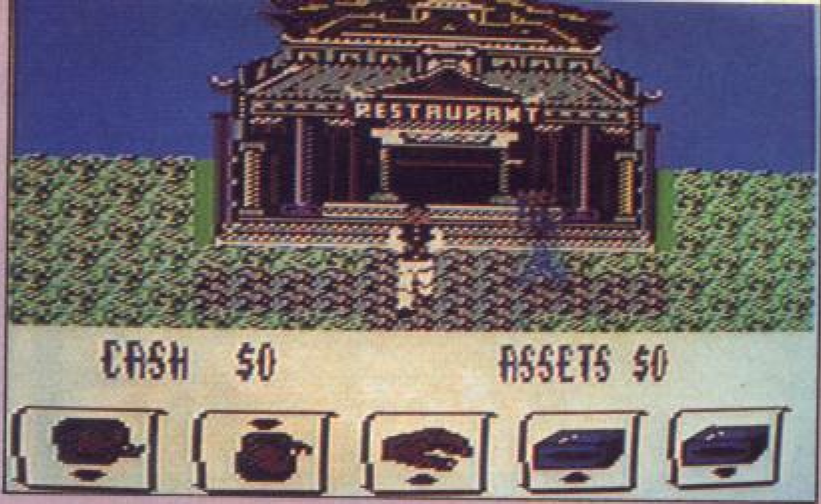
Gather round all you tennis ball fans. *Rebounder*, follow up to last years Gremlin Graphics Gold Medal game, *Bounder*, can once again enter the bouncy world of that scrolling overhead platform game. The latest edition features 18 levels of platforms scrolling in all four directions, and a multitude of new enemies intent on your deflation!

This time around, the heroic tennis ball comes complete an on-board armoury of lasers with which he can despatch any alien stupid enough to stray into its path. Armour can also be gathered along the way, and there are Pumping Stations dotted around where the vulcanised sprite can re-inflate. All those features have to be utilised if the objective is to be achieved – the destruction of the Master Alien on the final level.

Rebounder should be available next month at a price of £9.99 on cassette and £14.99 disk.







TAI-PAN

Tai-Pan, the much-touted game of the James Clavell novel, is in its final throes of completion.

The action revolves around the trade contraband between China, the Europeans and the Americans. Taking the role of Dirk Struan, pirate, smuggler and manipulator of men, you set about amassing your fortune by trading and building an empire. Starting out from basics, you have to trade, barter, slice and dice your way to the top – a sort of oriental *Elite*, so to speak.

There's a wide variety of adventuring and arcade elements, and the game can be played in a number of ways depending on your personal tastes.

Tai-Pan is available on cassette only at the price of £8.95 and is should be ready in time for next month's issue.

ZYNAPS

Zynaps is the latest horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up from Hewson. You play a pilot trying to escape the horrors of captivity – which requires battling and blasting through over 450 screens of alien infested landscape.

Programmer John Cumming is working away at this very moment – cramming in the high resolution scrolling, three-dimensional parallax starfield and as many sprites as possible . . .

There should be a review next month, so keep your eyes out.



OH NO! GAME OVER MAN . . GAME OVER

Ocean's forthcoming release Game Over is currently under development by the Spanish programming team Dynamic (authors of the difficult *Army Moves*).

The action is set in a far-away galaxy where a despotic Queen has managed to subjugate the five Confederations of Alpha Centauri. Her once loyal Lieutenant, Arkos, has become disenchanted with his Queen's stranglehold on her people and joined the rebel forces under the Blue Star General. His first mission is to destroy the Queen's domain and end her evil reign.

He starts in the Planet Prison, where the minerals necessary for the upkeep of the Empire are torn from the bowels of the planet. When that has been destroyed, a trip through the jungle has to be endured before the Queen's palace can be infiltrated and blown from here to kingdom come.

It looks as if *Game Over* could be even more frustrating than *Army Moves* – so prepare to part with £8.95 for the cassette version, or £12.95 for disk.



WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

THE ZZAPTIONNAIRE RESULTS

GENDER

Let's start with the important stuff . . . sex! Our suspicions that the ZZAP! readership is predominantly male were confirmed, with a staggering 99.5% of the ZZAPTIONNAIRE replies coming from non-women. It was reassuring to see that none of our respondents tried to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to this question . . .



AS READ BY THE OLDER WOMAN!

There are all sorts of averages, according to statisticians – Mean, Mode and Median being just three. But we're talking simple arithmetical averages here.

ZZAP! 64 is the magazine preferred by older women! Surprisingly, the average age of the of the non-men readers who responded to the ZZAPTIONNAIRE was 30 years. As they represented 0.5% of the response they didn't distort the figures too much. The average ZZAP! 64 reader is male and 16 years old . . . a situation likely to hold true next year as well, because the largest single group of ZZAP! readers is composed of 15 year olds – out of the thousand replies we analysed, 188 were sent in by people claiming to be 15.

Average Age	**16**
Average female Age	**30**
Average male Age	**16**
Largest age group	**15**

IN-BETWEEN READING ISSUES OF ZZAP!

Where is the average 16 year old? At school, that's where. Nearly three-quarters of our readership is struggling with homework as an alternative to sessions at the joystick. According to our sample, eight out of every hundred ZZAP! readers are real brainboxes, studying at college or university – nearly twice as many ZZAP! readers have a job, either full or part time. Only four out of every hundred of our readers are unemployed, a figure which is below the national average.

School	**73%**
College/University	**8%**
Full Time Workers	**13%**
Part Time Workers	**2%**
Unemployed	**4%**

THE £20 MILLION QUESTION . . .

You're a fairly well-off bunch, by all accounts. Only a tiny minority of ZZAP! readers spend more than £11 a week on computer games, but a massive 94% of our readers splash out between £2 and £10 a week. ZZAP! has got more than 70,000 readers, and if they each spend £6 a week on average on computer games then they pour nearly £20 MILLION a year into the tills of software sellers. That's nearly enough money to buy one and a half Phantom attack aircraft . . .

£2-5	**69%**
£6-10	**25%**
£11-20	**4%**
£20 or more	**2%**

SERIOUS STUFF

UTILITIES

Nearly a third of you bought a utility in the last six months – and nearly as many intend to buy a utility in the next six months. So you should welcome the return of Gary Liddon's technical bit in the middle . . .

PERIPHERAL PURCHASING

Peripherals fared slightly worse than utilities, with 31% of you admitting to buying a peripheral in the last six months. 26% of ZZAP! readers intend to splash out on a peripheral before Christmas.

STAYING FAITHFUL TO COMMODORE

Only 15% of the people to replied said that they planned to buy another computer between now and Christmas, and of that 15% nearly half had designs on an Amiga. The Commodore 128 and Atari ST took roughly equal shares of the rest of the ZZAP! readers' upgrade market.

ZZAP! 64 YOUR FAVOURITE FRIEND

The biggest influence when it comes to deciding whether to buy a game is the review we give it, followed closely by recommendation from a friend. In order of importance, the reasons you gave for being influenced were as follows:

1. Magazine Review
2. Friends Recommendation
3. Price
4. Advert
5. Author
6. Producer

Over half of you always use ZZAP! as a source of reference when buying software, while a tiny 1% claim they NEVER refer to ZZAP! when they're planning a trip down to the software shop.

GETTING INTO ZZAP!

A fifth of our readers have been taking ZZAP! since Issue One. By the time Issue Six had hit the streets, 36% of our readers had caught on and by the end of Year One, 60% of the people who now read ZZAP! had started the habit. Once the habit starts, it's difficult to give up – 76% who bought ZZAP! for the first time simply couldn't stop, and have collected a copy every month since they started.

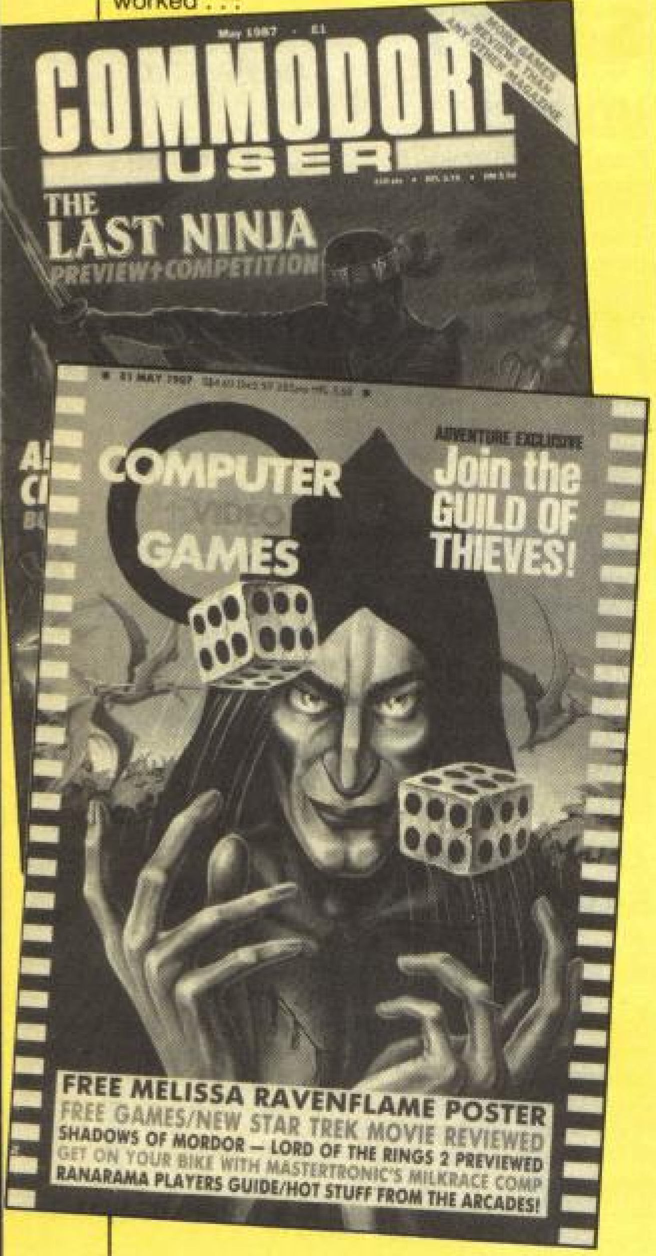
Of the people who don't subscribe to ZZAP!, 43% make sure that their newsagent reserves a copy of the magazine for them, while 57% take pot luck.

When it comes to sharing you copy of the magazine, you're a fairly tight-fisted lot – as ▶

the analysis of the question which asked how many other people get to read YOUR copy of ZZAP! shows:

Nobody else	**34%**
One	**24%**
Two	**19%**
Three	**11%**
Four	**5%**
Five	**7%**

When Glenys took out her pocket calculator and added up these figures, she worked out that on average each copy is read by 2.624 readers. Which means that nearly 200,000 people must be reading a copy of ZZAP! every month. Last year's survey indicated that 3.5 people read every copy of ZZAP! sold, so the publisher's message that appeared in Issue 14's ZZAPTIONNAIRE analysis seems to have worked . . .



ALTERNATIVE READING

We know that ZZAP! is your favourite magazine, but what do you read when you don't have a copy at hand? Most of you plumped for the magazine which appears to be an eternal runner-up, Commodore User, while a few others decided to find out about a whole range of other machines through the pages of C&VG.

Commodore User	**27%**
C&VG	**26%**
Popular Computing Weekly	**10%**
CCI	**10%**
Computer Gamer	**10%**
Commodore Horizons	**7%**
PCW	**5%**
OTHER	**5%**

THE TOP SIXTEEN RUN-DOWN

There have been a few changes in tastes over the last 12 months if the results of the poll which asked you give aspects of ZZAP! a mark out of ten. This year COMPUNET came bottom



of the 16 selection poll, bravely maintaining the bottom position it established in the last ZZAPTIONNAIRE. The SCORELORD came 15th, and moving up the chart we have WHITE WIZARD, ZZAP!STICK, ZZAP!BACK and the EDITORIAL before ADVERTISEMENTS which came 11th out of 20 last year and 10th out of 16 this year – a slide in real terms.

SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS occupied the Number 9 slot this year while CHARTS squeaked in at Number 8 – last year the Charts were much more popular, coming out third most popular part of ZZAP! In the 7 slot this year came READER OFFERS, a new development. Previews fared less well than last time, ending up at Number 6 as opposed to 4th position they achieved last year. NEWS made some ground, landing at Number 5, while Lloyd's RRAP made Number 4 and Competitions made Number 3 – both improving on their relative rankings of a year ago.

Up at the top, however, little changes. TIPS and REVIEWS occupied the Number 1 and 2 slots last year and saw no reason to change just because 12 months have elapsed . . .

REVIEWING THE REVIEWS

The vast majority (87%) felt that our reviews are detailed enough, and coincidentally, the same majority felt they were long enough. A slightly smaller majority (82%) thought the comments were detailed enough. When it comes to screenshots the majority thought there were enough screenshots, although it was a slightly smaller majority (57%). We set the ZZAPTIONNAIRE before full colour became a feature of ZZAP!, so maybe the screenshot vote will go up in time for next year's probing quiz.

RATING THE RATINGS

You're in agreement (generally). A loyal 9% of you *always* agree with out ratings, while a more realistically-minded 76% of our readers find themselves agreeing with the ratings 'More often than not.' No-one is in total disagreement, and a tiny 1% of respondents 'Rarely' agreed with the ZZAP! ratings. 14% were in agreement 'Occasionally'.

RANKING THE RANKERS

The Electoral Reform Society might not agree with our methods, but when it came to casting votes for our reviewing team it was Jazza Rignall who topped the poll as 'Reviewer you most often agree with.' He collected 46% of the popularity and was duly elected Chief Ego. The 'soon to be forgotten' Mr Penn came second, with 28%, Steve Jarratt – a relative newcomer to these pages – gained 11% of the votes under our system. Paul Sumner didn't quite achieve double figures (9%), but Richard Eddy trailed the poll with a mere 6%.

BITS'N'BOBS

That awkward 1% was back trying to cause trouble when we asked you for your opinion on ZZAP! covers – maybe Eugene Lacey filled in a ZZAPTIONNAIRE form! The covers were adjudged 'rubbish' by that 1%, but 77% thought they were great.

Opinion on features such as TAMARA KNIGHT and TERMINAL MAN: 28% thought they were 'great', 41% plonked for 'okay' and 31% decided they were 'rubbish'.

CHALLENGING STUFF

More than three-quarters of you want to see the challenge back (77%), and of the people rooting for the return of a Challenge the opinion was four to one for Reader Vs Reviewer.

AAGH! No! KEEP IT OUT!

Last but not least, we wanted to know what you didn't want to see between ZZAP!'s covers. The fact that most of you are upwardly mobile became quite clear as three quarters objected to *regular* C16 coverage, while only just over one third objected to reading news of the Amiga. Programming tips, arcade news and hardware coverage proved quite popular, receiving fewer of the 'nay' votes. Just hope the C16 Supplement this Issue isn't *too* annoying!

C16	**75%**
Amiga	**37%**
Program Tips	**24%**
More Arcade	**20%**
Hardware	**20%**

THANKS

To show our eternal gratitude for your help in completing this survey we offered a fab selection of prizes to a few lucky respondents. They are:
WINNER: Darren Clarke, Derbyshire (£50 worth of software, Sweatshirt and T-shirt)
RUNNERS UP: Steve Parker, Newport; **Alan Aird**, Clackmannanshire; **Michael Dixon**, Barnstaple; **P Mason**, Birmingham (£10 worth of software, T-shirt and cap)

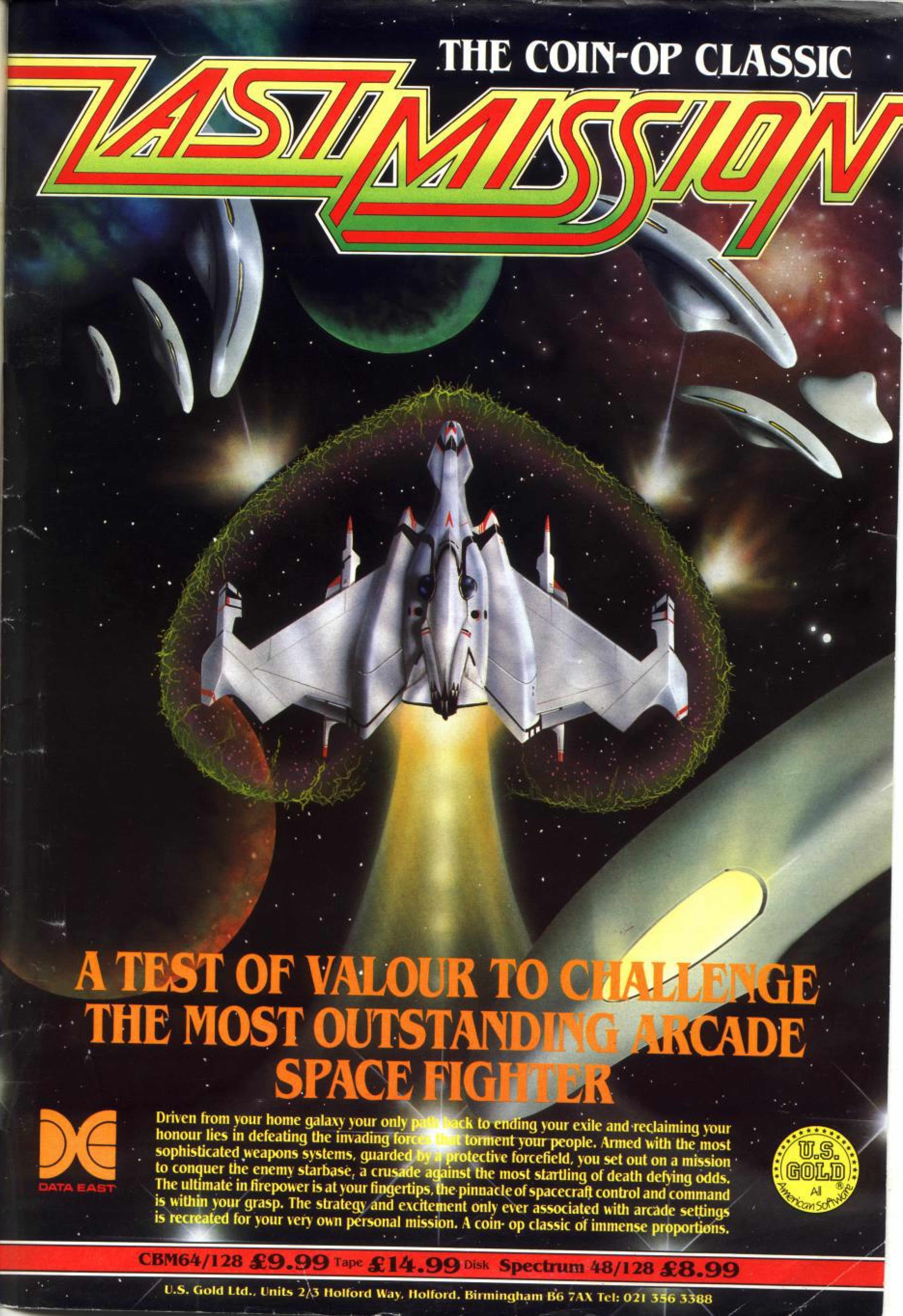
Update:
Saving young **Pas** and his sister from the clutches of an ancient robot leads **Cross** – part man, part computer, part virus – into the midst of their tribe's ceremonies of the **Searing** and the **Giving** . . .

THE TERMINAL MAN





BY OLIVER FREY **Next Month: The Lightgivers**


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